

**IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
FOR THE NORTHER DISTRICT OF OHIO**

GINA WEISBLAT,

Plaintiff,

v.

JOHN CARROLL UNIVERSITY

Defendant.

Case No. 1:22-cv-2064

Judge J. Philip Calabrese

Magistrate Judge Jonathan D. Greenberg

**PLAINTIFF’S BRIEF IN OPPOSITION TO
DEFENDANT’S MOTION FOR SUMMARY
JUDGMENT**

Now comes Plaintiff Gina Weisblat (“Plaintiff” or Ms. Weisblat”) pursuant to this Court’s order of June 7, 2024 and Civil Rule 56 and hereby submits her brief in opposition to Defendant John Carroll University’s (“JCU” or “Defendant”) motion for summary judgment on its first two grounds contained in its Motion for Summary Judgment. Those two grounds put forward by JCU are that the “de minimus language used from the 2013 Registration is not copyrightable” and that “NEOMED is the owner of any copyright to the 2013 Application under the work-for-hire doctrine.” (See Defendant’s motion for summary judgment at p. 1)¹. Plaintiff asserts that the defendant is not entitled to summary on either of the aforementioned asserted grounds. In fact, the claim that NEOMED is the owner of any copyright is demonstrably false.

STATEMENT OF THE CASE

On November 15, 2022 Plaintiff filed a verified complaint for damages and injunctive relief against JCU alleging Copyright infringement related to copyright registration

¹ The bulk of alleged evidence JCU uses to support its motion for summary judgment is a Declaration from their trial counsel Rachel Smoot. Ms. Smoot attempts to authenticate evidence and present testimony to this court while acting as counsel and not actually having personal knowledge of the assertions she makes in the declaration. Her declaration should be stricken and not considered as admissible evidence to support the motion for summary judgment.

TXu002317331 entitled Health Professionals Affinity Community and attached a true and accurate copy of the Copyright Registration Certificate and attached a true and accurate copy of the copyrighted work (Complaint at paragraph 16). JCU answered the complaint vaguely denying the allegations therein and asserted a number of affirmative defenses (See Answer).

On March 12, 2024 Plaintiff's counsel abandoned her and moved to withdraw as counsel for plaintiff. On that same date this Court granted the motion to withdraw. On May 22, 2024 JCU filed a motion for Summary Judgment seeking dismissal of the case. On June 5, 2024 new counsel for plaintiff entered an appearance and sought an extension of time to conduct discovery (that original counsel had failed to do) and have an extension of time to submit an opposition to the motion for summary judgment. On June 7, 2024 this Court issued an order that plaintiff must respond only to the first two grounds that defendant advanced in its motion for summary judgment. Those two grounds put forward by JCU are that the "de minimus language used from the 2013 Registration is not copyrightable" and that "NEOMED is the owner of any copyright to the 203 Application under the work-for-hire doctrine." Neither assertion by defendant is correct. Plaintiff now submits this brief in opposition to those two grounds asserted by JCU which she supports by her Declaration and the attachments thereto which is attached hereto as Exhibit A.

STATEMENT OF THE FACTS

Ms. Weisblat is a nationally renowned social science researcher with numerous writings, teachings, and research studies in fields including health citizenship, public health policy, social health disparities, and advancing the talents and skills of underrepresented and underprivileged populations (Verified Complaint at para 9). She has been a faculty member at Baldwin Wallace University, John Carroll University, and was the in the Department of Family and Community Medicine, as well as the Director of Education for Service (Dean's Office), at Northeast Ohio

Medical University (“NEOMED”). (Id. At para 10). Ms. Weisblat is a National Kresge Scholar, winning this distinction with her Asset Based Paradigm model, and a National Scholar for Innovation and Academic Excellence for the Sullivan Alliance. (Id. At para 11). Ms. Weisblat has been the Principal Investigator or Co-Principal Investigator for multiple grants related to community health, community engagement, community development, and health citizenship. (Id. At para 12).

In addition to her numerous accolades, Ms. Weisblat has engaged in community advocacy and managed a large portfolio of grant funded programs, including the Health Professions Affinity Community program (“HPAC”), which is a pipeline health-care professional program for the youth that is partially funded by AmeriCorps. (Id. At para 13). Plaintiff designed and led the AmeriCorps HPAC program and was employed as the program’s Principal Investigator (“PI”). (Id. At para 14). The AmeriCorps HPAC grant program was hosted by various institutions, including NEOMED, Baldwin Wallace University, and, most recently, JCU. (Id. At para 15). Ms. Weisblat is the author and claimant of copyright registration TXu002317331 entitled Health Professions Affinity Community (the “Copyrighted Work” or the “Work”). (See Complaint Exhibit A a true and accurate copy of this Copyright Registration Certificate and Complaint Exhibit B a true and accurate copy of the Copyrighted Work (Id. At para 16). The Copyrighted Work was registered on or about May 13, 2022 and forms a portion of Ms. Weisblat’s creative and literary intellectual property that was part of the AmeriCorps HPAC grant program. (Id. At para 17).

Plaintiff’s career as a researcher and advocate for the empowerment of young people began in 1990, when she was hired as a community organizer for the West Side Citizens Organization in St. Paul, Minnesota. She was assigned to create a youth council of teenagers to

give input to community leaders in an economically depressed part of the city, but after talking to the kids, it was clear to her that the kids had much more to offer. She subsequently developed a program, called Teens Networking Together (“TNT”), which empowered the kids to identify the problems they perceived in their community, and to propose solutions to those problems. The language that Ms. Weisblat used in the copyrighted 2013 AmeriCorps’ application derived from the language used to create and fund TNT. Incidentally, the program was hugely successful, and is thriving still 30 years later, run by the very students that she first recruited. The above is documented on the TNT website (tntstp.org) under the History tab (See Declaration of Plaintiff Gina Weisblat attached hereto and expressly incorporated herein as Exhibit A at para 2)

While raising a family and working toward her PhD in Urban Studies at Cleveland State University in the late 1990s, Ms. Weisblat did consult work for BRICK, an organization devoted to enhancing the ability of young African American men to make a difference in their communities. She obtained grants to fund them, and her language in those grants discussed the need to organize existing assets more effectively. In 1999, she wrote a chapter entitled “Youth, Citizenship and Cleveland’s Future” which was published in The New American City Faces Its Regional Future: A Cleveland Perspective. In that chapter, she discussed these concepts, using much of the same wording that appears in the copyrighted 2013 grant application. (Weisblat Declaration at para 3, Declaration exhibit 1).

After completing her doctoral dissertation, which focused on the effective use of social capital to aid communities, she was awarded a PhD, and was teaching in the Urban Studies department at Cleveland State. During this time, she honed the “asset-based paradigm” that was discussed in her dissertation and would become the cornerstone of her work. She wrote a white paper explaining the Asset-Based Paradigm, a method of using what limited resources are

available in a community to achieve success that is self-sustaining. This paper was presented to the Kresge Foundation, and she was awarded a Kresge fellowship to fund additional research and writing on the subject. (Weisblat Declaration at para 4, Declaration Exhibit 2).

She subsequently wrote a paper describing practical use of the Asset-Based Paradigm, which was awarded Best International Paper in 2011 by The Society of Research Administrators International. The white paper of 2010 and the awarded paper of 2011 both contain wording very similar to what is contained in the copyrighted 2013 grant application. (Weisblat Declaration at para 5, Declaration Exhibit 3).

Her work garnered the attention of Erik Porfeli at Northeast Ohio Medical University (NEOMed), where Ms. Weisblat was hired in 2012, and with his support she developed the HPAC program. She described this work in a paper published in The Journal of Urban Learning Teaching and Research (“Through the lens of the students: Using narrative inquiry to evaluate an innovative urban high school” 2013). The writing that she used in the copyrighted 2013 grant application was taken directly from all the publications described above. This was not a boiler plate grant application, but rather a unique expression of the concepts she had developed over a 30-year career. When she left NEOMed in 2018, she successfully insisted that NEOMed relinquish any rights to her work, in particular any work related to the HPAC program. On or about March 7, 2018 she entered into a Separation Agreement with NEOMed (Weisblat Declaration at para 7, Declaration Exhibit 5). That agreement with NEOMED conveyed to Ms. Weisblat the full rights to the AmeriCorps/HPAC/CRUSH program, and everything related to it. NEOMED does not own, and does not claim to own, any copyright to the 2013 Application under the work-for-hire doctrine. According to the Affidavit of NEOMED’s General Counsel Maria Schimer, under the NEOMED Intellectual Property Policy NEOMED does not assert any

copyright ownership for Ms. Weisblat's work on AmeriCorps' program including that in 2013. (Affidavit of NEOMED General Counsel Maria Schimer, attached as Exhibit B). This application was the culmination of 30 years of work, and John Carroll stole it from Ms. Weisblat, short-circuiting her career in the middle of a pandemic, and claiming it as their own. (Weisblat Declaration at para 6).

JCU did not draft the AmeriCorps' application. Ms. Weisblat wrote that application herself, and she was not an employee of John Carroll University at the time. This was in fact a virtual copy of the 2018 application that she wrote for Baldwin-Wallace University. NEOMED granted Ms. Weisblat sole rights to the AmeriCorps/HPAC/CRUSH program, and Ms. Weisblat was the first author on all related presentations. They did not grant the rights to Erik Porfeli or anyone else (Weisblat Declaration at para 8; 11).

The statement on page 5 of JCU's Motion for Summary Judgment that JCU notified Ms. Weisblat that she was no longer needed as a volunteer is not true. She was forcibly removed from the program and falsely accused of wrongdoing as a part of this removal. JCU's 2021 AmeriCorps application is nearly identical to Ms. Weisblat's. They utilized her alternate 2021 program name and changed the name of the plan (Student Success Plan, Individualized Goal Plan, etc.) but the program is almost identical, the wording is almost identical, the concepts are identical, the resources are identical. (Weisblat Declaration at para 9-10).

JCU has repeatedly claimed that Anita Fakhoury was a co-author of the work. This is a complete falsehood. Anita Fakhoury did not write ANY of the grant application in 2019. And anything she wrote in 2021 was a direct copy of Ms. Weisblat's work. Anita Fakhoury does not have the educational background or writing skills to create that document (Weisblat Declaration at para 12).

According to the Declaration submitted by Ms. Weisblat there are multiple sections of the 2013 application which contain clearly original expressions, many of which are taken out of the two papers that she wrote, and received acclamation for, in years 2010-2011. On page 3 of the application, it states "Although these interventions...the target population is struggling to survive...To meet these challenges...employing unseen and underutilized community assets...health sector workforce." This is a unique expression, drawn directly from the 2 above-referenced papers. On Page 5 of the application: "...to encourage students from various NE Ohio communities...in exchange for serving their community", again a unique expression from the referenced papers, and also from the chapter she published in 1999 in *The New American City Faces Its Regional Future: A Cleveland Perspective*. (Weisblat Declaration at para 1-15).

Additionally on Page 5 of the application: "AmeriCorps members will create healthy networks...struggle to utilize necessary resources based on their location...flourish through the work of AmeriCorps members", again unique expression drawn from the 2 referenced papers. On Page 6 of the application: "Organizations are dependent on an adequate supply...compatible with their health career aspirations", again unique expression drawn from the 2 referenced papers. On Page 7 of the application: "Leaders can facilitate sustainability...explore the existing resources they may possess", again unique expression drawn from the 2 referenced papers. Also on Page 7: "We will measure our impact..." is a unique expression of an approach to measuring outcomes. On Page 8 of the application: "The project establishes as a baseline construct...social and ethical skills" is a unique expression of a new paradigm. On Page 11: "The notion of recruiting volunteers....implementation process" is a unique expression of a new paradigm. Thus, the copyrighted 2013 application did not merely "express factual statements", as they assert, but was in fact a unique expression that she developed over the course of 30 years and had laid out

almost verbatim in multiple previous publications. Under Title 45, Subtitle B, Chapter VI, Part 689 of the AmeriCorps Statutes & Regulations, Plagiarism (defined as "the appropriation of another person's ideas, processes, results or words without giving appropriate credit") falls under the category of Research Misconduct. John Carroll copied many of these unique expressions without her permission and without regard to her ownership of these expressions, in direct violation of their Code of Conduct and the above AmeriCorps statute. (Weisblat Declaration at para 15-23).

Clearly, the document was Ms. Weisblat's own independent creation mostly prior to her employment at NEOMED, which NEOMED lays no claim to and JCU stole virtually word for word.

LAW AND ARGUMENT

The Court is well versed in the Summary Judgment standard that it must apply at this stage in the litigation. Plaintiff's Verified Complaint and Declaration and other evidence clearly demonstrate that issues of fact exist as to plaintiff's copyright claim.

PLAINTIFF'S APPLICATION WAS COPYRIGHTABLE

Defendant first argues that the "de minimus language used from the 2013 Registration was not copyrightable." (Defendants' brief at p. 9). Defendant's argument is that that Plaintiff cannot claim exclusive copyright to the limited language that is used to describe the facts surrounding the funding of HPAC program and its concept. Defendant is wrong. According to Ms. Weisblat's verified complaint and Declaration the language is almost all hers. In her declaration, at paragraphs 13 to 24, Ms. Weisblat outlines how JCU has essentially stolen her copyrightable work.

This Court's analysis should begin with some of the basics copyright law. The U.S. Constitution authorized Congress to "secur[e] for limited Times to Authors and Inventors the exclusive Right to their respective Writings and Discoveries." U.S. Const. art. I, § 8, cl. 8. With that authority, Congress has passed laws granting exclusive copyrights to "original works of authorship fixed in any tangible medium of expression." 17 U.S.C. § 102(a). The term "original" means "the work was independently created by the author" and "possesses at least some minimal degree of creativity." *Feist Publ'ns, Inc. v. Rural Tel. Serv. Co.*, 499 U.S. 340, 345, 111 S. Ct. 1282, 113 L. Ed. 2d 358 (1991) (citation omitted). Copyright protection "grants an author an exclusive right to produce his work . . . to encourage the production of works that others might reproduce more cheaply." *Google LLC v. Oracle Am., Inc.*, 141 S. Ct. 1183, 1195, 209 L. Ed. 2d 311 (2021).

Although a copyright owner enjoys various exclusive rights, *see* 17 U.S.C. § 106, "[t]he mere fact that a work is copyrighted does not mean that every element of the work may be protected," *Feist Publ'ns*, 499 U.S. at 348. To that end, Congress placed limits on copyright protection: "In no case does copyright protection for an original work of authorship extend to any idea, procedure, process, system, method of operation, concept, principle, or discovery, regardless of the form in which it is described, explained, illustrated, or embodied in such work." 17 U.S.C. § 102(b). Thus, "copyrights protect 'expression' but not the 'ideas' that lie behind it." *Google*, 141 S. Ct. at 1196; *see Lexmark Int'l, Inc. v. Static Control Components, Inc.*, 387 F.3d 522, 534 (6th Cir. 2004), *abrogated on other grounds by eBay Inc. v. MercExchange, L.L.C.*, 547 U.S. 388, 126 S. Ct. 1837, 164 L. Ed. 2d 641 (2006). And, as the Sixth Circuit has explained, "the task of separating expression from idea in this setting is a vexing one." *Lexmark*, 387 F.3d at 535. However, here it is clear that the work was created by MS. Weisblat over the

course of her career. However, one fact is clear, JCU did nothing to create the original thoughts of this document and merely seeks to steal Ms. Weisblat's career work and claim it as its own (Weisblat Declaration at para 6).

Here, it is clear that based upon Ms. Weisblat's declaration, and the Verified Complaint, that the copyrighted work is Ms. Weisblat's original work, was essentially copied by JCU and is copyrightable. JCU's contention is false and is contradicted by Ms. Weisblat's evidence. Summary judgment must be denied on defendant's claim that the language is not copyrightable.

NEOMED IS NOT THE OWNER OF ANY COPYRIGHT UNDER THE WORK TO HIRE DOCTRINE.

JCU next claims that NEOMED and not Ms. Weisblat is not the owner of the 2013 Copyright. That claim is false. Even NEOMED makes no such claim (See Affidavit of NEOMED General Counsel Maria Schimer, attached as Exhibit B). When Ms. Weisblat departed NEOMED in 2018 she entered into a separation agreement with NEOMED that indicated that she was the owner of that program. Remarkably JCU asserts that "NEOMED owns copyright to the 2013 Application under the work-for-hire doctrine (JCU motion at p. 11) but presents no evidence supporting such claims. Moreover, the alleged employer is not a party to this action and has not asserted that it is the owner of the copyright. In fact, the opposite is true NEOMED asserts no copyright ownership. JCU has asserted a false contention in its claim that it was a work-for-hire owned by NEOMED.

Plaintiff has asserted in her declaration that the document was not a work for hire, was created using materials she created over many years and her then employer is not claiming any ownership to the copyright. Moreover, JCU falsely relies on the testimony of Dr. Erik Porfeli for their claim that the copyright is owned by NEOMED (who has not made such a claim), however, JCU seeks to mislead this Court. Dr. Porfeli testified that Ms. Weisblat "was clearly the first author

of [the] document and that the document was created by taking content from prior grants and using that information to prepare this grant". (Porfeli depo p. 33, 12-25, p. 34, l. 1-24; See Exhibit 9 to JCU brief) According to the plaintiff she created this document from all of her prior works the vast majority of which was prior to her employment with NEOMED (see Weisblat Declaration at para 2-6). Specifically:

My career as a researcher and advocate for the empowerment of young people began in 1990, when I was hired as a community organizer for the West Side Citizens Organization in St. Paul, Minnesota. I was assigned to create a youth council of teenagers to give input to community leaders in an economically depressed part of the city, but after talking to the kids, it was clear to me that the kids had much more to offer. The program that I developed, called Teens Networking Together, empowered the kids to identify the problems they perceived in their community, and to propose solutions to those problems. The language that I used in the copyrighted 2013 AmeriCorps application derives from the language used to create and fund TNT. Incidentally, the program was hugely successful, and is thriving still 30 years later, run by the very students that I first recruited. The above is documented on the TNT website (tntstp.org) under the History tab.

Id at para 2.

Copyright ownership of a work is presumed to vest in its author--the person who translates an idea into a fixed, tangible expression--unless the actual author's employer can establish, the burden being on the employer, that it is a "work made for hire." If a work is one made for hire, the employer for whom it was prepared is considered the author and is presumed to own the copyright. The work-for-hire exception is overridden only by a clear writing, signed by the parties, that reserves authorship rights to the employee, 17 U.S.C.S. § 201(b). The employer can show that a work is made for hire by establishing that it was created by an employee acting within the scope of the employment relationship, 17 U.S.C.S. § 101.

Here, plaintiff asserts ownership of the copyright based upon years of creation. Her employer in 2013, NEOMED, has not, and is not, making any claim that it owns the copyright pursuant to the work-for-hire doctrine.

JCU's has no basis to make a claim that the work-for-hire doctrine precludes Ms.

Weisblat's claim. In fact, that claim is utterly frivolous,

CONCLUSION

Defendant is not entitled to summary judgment.

Respectfully submitted,

/s/ John F. Burke, III

JOHN F. BURKE, III (0059974)

BurkesLaw, LLC

55 Public Square, Suite 2100

Cleveland, OH 44113

Phone 216-455-5980

Email: john@BurkesLaw.net

**CERTIFICATE OF TRACK ASSIGNMENT AND OF COMPLIANCE
WITH WORD COUNT**

The undersigned hereby certifies pursuant to Local Rule 7.1(f) that the parties agreed that this case will proceed on the standard track and that this memorandum adheres to the word count limitation applicable to briefs in opposition to dispositive motions in cases assigned to the standard track pursuant to this Court's order.

/s/ John F. Burke, III

JOHN F. BURKE, III (0059974)

Attorney for plaintiff

CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE

A true copy of the foregoing Brief in Opposition was filed electronically on this 8th day of July 2024. Notice of this filing will be sent to all parties by operation of the Court's electronic filing system.

/s/ John F. Burke, III

JOHN F. BURKE, III (0059974)

Attorney for Plaintiff

**IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
FOR THE NORTHER DISTRICT OF OHIO**

GINA WEISBLAT,

Plaintiff,

v.

JOHN CARROLL UNIVERSITY

Defendant.

Case No. 1:22-cv-2064

Judge J. Philip Calabrese

Magistrate Judge Jonathan D. Greenberg

DECLARATION OF GINA WEISBLAT

I, Gina Weisblat, declare that the following is true and correct to the best of my personal knowledge:

1. I am the plaintiff in this case, and I am over eighteen years of age and am competent to testify to the facts in this Declaration.
2. My career as a researcher and advocate for the empowerment of young people began in 1990, when I was hired as a community organizer for the West Side Citizens Organization in St. Paul, Minnesota. I was assigned to create a youth council of teenagers to give input to community leaders in an economically depressed part of the city, but after talking to the kids, it was clear to me that the kids had much more to offer. The program that I developed, called Teens Networking Together, empowered the kids to identify the problems they perceived in their community, and to propose solutions to those problems. The language that I used in the copyrighted 2013 AmeriCorps application derives from the language used to create and fund TNT. Incidentally, the program was hugely successful, and is thriving still 30 years later, run by the very students that I first recruited. The above is documented on the TNT website (tntstp.org) under the History tab.
3. While raising a family and working toward my PhD in Urban Studies at Cleveland State University in the late 1990s, I did consulting work for BRICK, an organization devoted to enhancing the ability of young African American men to make a difference in their communities. I obtained grants to fund them, and my language in those grants discussed the need to organize existing assets more effectively. In 1999, my chapter entitled "Youth, Citizenship and Cleveland's Future" was published in The New American City Faces Its Regional Future: A Cleveland Perspective. In that chapter, I discuss these concepts, using much of the same wording that appears in the copyrighted 2013 grant application. (A true and accurate copy of said referenced pages from the book are attached hereto and incorporated herein as Declaration Exhibit 1).

4. After completing my doctoral dissertation, which focused on the effective use of social capital to aid communities, I was awarded my PhD, and was teaching in the Urban Studies department at Cleveland State. During this time, I honed the “asset-based paradigm” that was discussed in my dissertation and would become the cornerstone of my work. I wrote a white paper explaining the Asset-Based Paradigm, a method of using what limited resources are available in a community to achieve success that is self-sustaining. (a true and accurate copy of said white Paper is attached hereto and incorporated herein as Declaration Exhibit 2) This paper was presented to the Kresge Foundation, and I was awarded a Kresge fellowship to fund additional research and writing on the subject.
5. I subsequently wrote a paper describing practical use of the Asset-Based Paradigm, which was awarded Best International Paper in 2011 by The Society of Research Administrators International. (a true and accurate copy of said white Paper is attached hereto and incorporated herein as Declaration Exhibit 3) The white paper of 2010 and the awarded paper of 2011 both contain wording very similar to what is contained in the copyrighted 2013 grant application.
6. My work garnered the attention of Erik Porfeli at Northeast Ohio Medical University (NEOMed), where I was hired in 2012, and with his support I developed the HPAC program. I described this work in a paper published in The Journal of Urban Learning Teaching and Research (“Through the lens of the students: Using narrative inquiry to evaluate an innovative urban high school”, 2013). (a true and accurate copy of said white Paper is attached hereto and incorporated herein as Declaration Exhibit 4) The writing that I used in the copyrighted 2013 grant application was taken directly from all the publications described above. This was not a boiler plate grant application, but rather a unique expression of the concepts I honed over a 30-year career. When I left NEOMed in 2018, I insisted (successfully) that they relinquish any rights to my work, in particular related the HPAC program. NEOMed does not own, and does not claim to own, any copyright to the 2013 Application under the work-for-hire doctrine. This application was the culmination of 30 years of work, and John Carroll stole it from me, short-circuiting my career in the middle of a pandemic, and claiming it as their own.
7. On or about March 7, 2018 I entered into a Separation Agreement with Northeast Ohio Medical University, A true and accurate copy of that Agreement is attached hereto as Declaration Exhibit 5. That agreement with NEOMED conveys to me the full rights to the AmeriCorps/HPAC/CRUSH program, and everything related to it.
8. JCU did not draft the AmeriCorps application. I wrote that application myself, and I was not an employee of John Carroll University at the time. This was in fact a virtual copy of the 2018 application that I wrote for Baldwin-Wallace University
9. The statement on page 5 of JCU’s Motion for Summary Judgment that JCU notified me that I was no longer needed as a volunteer is not true. I was forcibly removed from the program and falsely accused of wrongdoing as a part of this removal.
10. JCU’s 2021 AmeriCorps application is nearly identical to mine. They utilized my alternate

2021 program name and changed the name of the plan (Student Success Plan, Individualized Goal Plan, etc.) but the program is almost identical, the wording is almost identical, the concepts are identical, the resources are identical.

11. NEOMED granted me sole rights to the AmeriCorps/HPAC/CRUSH program, and I was the first author on all related presentations. They did not grant the rights to Erik Porfeli or anyone else.
12. JCU has repeatedly claimed that Anita Fakhoury was a co-author of the work. This is a complete falsehood. Anita did not write ANY of the grant application in 2019. And anything she wrote in 2021 was a direct copy of my work. She does not have the educational background or writing skills to create that document.
13. There are multiple sections of the 2013 application which contain clearly original expressions, many of which are taken out of 2 papers that I wrote, and received acclamation for, in 2010-2011.
14. On page 3 of the application, "Although these interventions...the target population is struggling to survive...To meet these challenges...employing unseen and underutilized community assets...health sector workforce." This is a unique expression, drawn directly from the 2 above-referenced papers.
15. On Page 5 of the application: "...to encourage students from various NE Ohio communities...in exchange for serving their community", again a unique expression from the referenced papers, and also from the chapter I published in 1999 in The New American City Faces Its Regional Future: A Cleveland Perspective.
16. Also on Page 5 of the application: "AmeriCorps members will create healthy networks...struggle to utilize necessary resources based on their location...flourish through the work of AmeriCorps members", again unique expression drawn from the 2 referenced papers.
17. On Page 6 of the application: "Organizations are dependent on an adequate supply...compatible with their health career aspirations", again unique expression drawn from the 2 referenced papers.
18. On Page 7 of the application: "Leaders can facilitate sustainability...explore the existing resources they may possess", again unique expression drawn from the 2 referenced papers.
19. also on Page 7: "We will measure our impact..." is a unique expression of an approach to measuring outcomes.
20. On Page 8 of the application: "The project establishes as a baseline construct...social and ethical skills" is a unique expression of a new paradigm.

21. On Page 11: "The notion of recruiting volunteers....implementation process" is a unique expression of a new paradigm.
22. Thus, the copyrighted 2013 application did not merely "express factual statements", as they assert, but was in fact a unique expression that I developed over the course of 30 years and had laid out almost verbatim in multiple previous publications.
23. Under Title 45, Subtitle B, Chapter VI, Part 689 of the AmeriCorps Statutes & Regulations, Plagiarism (defined as "the appropriation of another person's ideas, processes, results or words without giving appropriate credit") falls under the category of Research Misconduct. John Carroll copied many of these unique expressions without my permission and without regard to my ownership of these expressions, in direct violation of their Code of Conduct and the above AmeriCorps statute.

I certify under penalty of perjury under the laws of the United States of America that the foregoing is true and correct. Executed this 8th day of July 2024 in Cleveland, Ohio.

/s/ Gina Weisblat

and Cleveland's Future

Gina Zipkin Weisblat,
Wendy Slone, and Susan Petrone

Anecdotal and statistical evidence indicate that today's youth are disconnected from their communities; this attitude negatively influences their relationships with adults and is symptomatic of the decline in many neighborhoods. Communities need to reclaim and take responsibility for their youth. Traditional methods of community building, such as extended family involvement, organized neighborhood activities, and well-defined roles for individuals of all ages, no longer exist within communities. Youth need real opportunities to take part in constructive change within their neighborhoods.

Gina Zipkin Weisblat and Wendy Slone are doctoral students at the Levin College of Urban Affairs. Susan Petrone is the editor at the Levin College's Urban Center and a freelance fiction writer, playwright, and editor.

Youth at a Glance

One of the most difficult and often unnoticed challenges facing the revitalization of Cleveland and its neighborhoods is the disengagement of

at large must be examined. At these times of these youth must be identified and programs must be implemented to offer youth an opportunity to become full participants in making decisions, implementing ideas, and creating change in their communities.

Since the early 1970s the United States has seen vast changes in the way in which young people are raised and find their place in society. What has traditionally been perceived as the typical American family—a middle-class, two-parent phenomenon—has changed. The support and guidance once found within the family unit and in the community are available less frequently, or sometimes not at all. It is not an overexaggeration to say that youth are in crisis. Statistical evidence bears out this claim.

The 1994 annual report of the Cuyahoga County Juvenile Court reported 11,611 complaints lodged against juveniles, which averages out to thirty-two complaints against youth a day in Cuyahoga County. The most heinous of those crimes reported included 60 cases of arson, 178 cases of sex offenses, 1,047 cases of burglary and robbery, 1,214 cases of drug charges, and 33 cases of homicide.¹

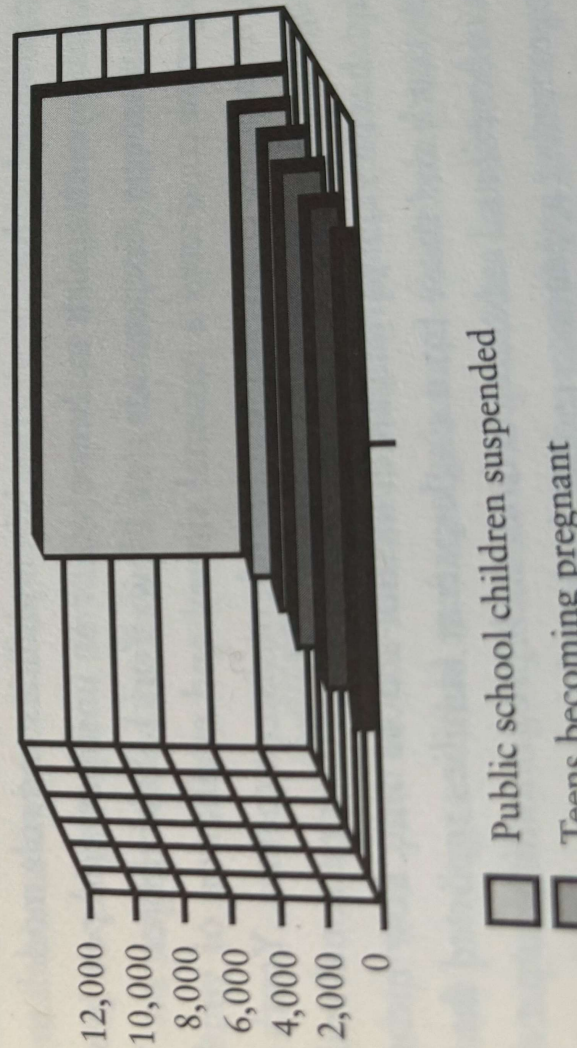
Violence is a constant threat to youth. What is disturbing is that the potential for violence is not concentrated only in schools or at home; it is a pervasive part of growing up in America in the late twentieth century. In a recent article in the *Journal of the American Medical Association*, entitled “Adolescent Exposure to Violence and Associated Symptoms of Psychological Trauma,” researchers studied the percentage of students victimized by violence within the Central neighborhood of the city of Cleveland. They found that 25.4 percent of female and 23.7 percent of male youths had been threatened at home; 30.5 percent of female and 34.8 percent of male youths had been threatened at school; 29.1 percent of female and 42.9 percent of male youths had been threatened in their neighborhood; 8.8 percent of female and 22.4 percent of male youths had been beaten or mugged in their neighborhood; 3.6 percent of female and 9.1 percent of male youths had been beaten or mugged at school; 16.3 percent of female and 7.0 percent of male youths had been sexually abused/assaulted; 9.1 percent of female and 16.0 percent of male youths had been attacked with a knife or involved in a stabbing; and 10.1 percent of female and 33.4 percent of

1992 year percent of youth in within the students, 4 suspended fact that lic School In release young tics, o mother of the Finally ing in

In addition to the threat of violence, youth are threatening their own future by disregarding their education. The Cleveland Public Schools' 1992 year-end review showed that 39.0 percent of ninth graders, 31.0 percent of tenth graders, 22.0 percent of eleventh graders, and 17.0 percent of seniors failed their current grade. Additionally, 10.5 percent of the youth in the Cleveland Public Schools voluntarily dropped out. Each year within the Cleveland Public Schools approximately 1,300 elementary students, 4,250 intermediate students, and 5,250 high school students are suspended and approximately 135 students expelled. More ominous is the fact that over three hundred weapons are confiscated from Cleveland Public School children each year.²

In the early 1990s, the Children's Defense Fund Greater Cleveland Project released startling statistics testifying to the difficulties and dangers faced by young people in Cleveland and similar urban areas. According to these statistics, one in five babies born in the city of Cleveland was born to a teenage mother and 91 percent of these births were to unmarried teens. Fifty percent of these mothers, aged eighteen and nineteen, had no high school diploma. Finally, at the time these statistics were released, 26 percent of all children living in Cuyahoga County were on Aid to Families with Dependent Children.³

A day in the life of America's youth



Also in 1990, the national Children's Defense Fund profiled a life in the day of America's youth and found that, on any given day, 2,756 teens become pregnant, 2,685 babies are born into poverty, 248 children are arrested for violent crimes, 176 children are arrested for drug abuse, 427 children are arrested for alcohol abuse or drunk driving, 10,988 public school children are suspended, and 2,250 students aged sixteen to twenty-four drop out of school.⁴

This barrage of statistics reflects a war of attrition taking place in our neighborhoods and communities and an increasing sense of despair, fear, and apathy. In spite of this seemingly irrevocable trend, changes can be made and revitalization is possible. The process must begin with a reexamination of the role of youth within our society.

The teenage years are a time for cognitive, emotional, social, and moral development. During this time, it is crucial that young people have opportunities to explore their new roles, develop independence through personal discovery, and discover how their identities are perceived within the community. Adolescence, much like young childhood, requires exploration of newly developed skills, such as coping and communication skills, the establishment of personal values systems, and more meaningful relationships with others. Judging from the aforementioned statistics, many young people do not feel valued in their communities and are not being given a positive and supportive atmosphere in which to grow and develop. Instead of being presented with tools to expand their abilities and role models to guide them, many youth are left to themselves or an unsupervised peer group.

The Carnegie Corporation (of New York) Task Force on Youth Development conducted a national survey and evaluation of youth programs, from which emerged a number of consistent themes. Youth would like programs that allow them to increase and test their personal and social skills and that they can participate in on non-school time. Low-income and minority youth and those from single-parent families reported the highest amount of benefit and satisfaction from such programming; most notably, such programming appears to reduce high-risk behavior and increase positive behavior.

This statement typifies the insensitivity to young people and the lack of confidence the adult community has in our youth. Young people are very sensitive to adult apprehension, whether it is covert disregard or overt suspicion, such as this notice placed in a convenience store entrance. Youth internalize these signals and, in turn, react in a negative manner toward themselves and society at large. Ruthanne Kurth-Schai, in her paper "The Roles of Youth in Society: A Reconceptualization," asserts that as perceptions cause adults to prize the opposite qualities in children that are respected in adults, we deny youth the opportunity to test out their individuality in safe situations and develop needed adult traits.

Kurth-Schai also reports on the traditional approach that adults have taken toward youth programming. She contends that most youth-oriented programs of today address adult-identified perceptions of youth issues, that these programs offer limited leadership roles and decision-making opportunities for the youth involved, and that the standard for success in the program is solely in judging personal growth instead of looking at the youths' contribution to society. Lastly, she points out that many programs are inaccessible to the majority of youth in this country.⁵

Youth programs need to be accessible to the widest possible range of students, but programming must also challenge them emotionally and intellectually while providing opportunities to develop leadership, communication, and social skills. It seems clear that it is necessary to evolve new mechanisms for youth acceptance and advancement—ones that could also lead to neighborhood revitalization. One potential mechanism for youth and neighborhood revitalization is the concept of citizenship.

Citizenship: An Overview

Citizenship is a part of the decision-making process that emphasizes rights and privileges within a formal society. Citizenship increases the level of responsibility of individuals and provides an outlet for community and individual empowerment. When examining today's youth it is evident that many young people have not been taught, formally or informally, their role within a thriving society. One means of educating youth in citizenship and all it entails is through youth-driven, youth-organized, and youth-implemented organizations.

In the United States, citizenship was traditionally a concept taught through community-centered schools and reinforced within the family.

Civic education programs were used as a tool to prepare students for the political responsibilities of citizenship. Students were also actively exposed to the civic responsibilities of citizenship through extracurricular activities, such as student government, athletics, or school-based drama, music, and other special interest clubs.

The concept of citizenship that existed up through the mid-1960s has eroded as the structures and institutions that perpetuated its future have died out. Instead of neighborhood grocery stores, drugstores, and restaurants we have Stop-N-Shops, Wal-Marts, and McDonalds. Instead of neighborhood block parties, impromptu community evening activities, or a local "gathering spot" such as a coffee shop or bar where informal politics are discussed, we have chat rooms and e-mail. Technology and the information age have changed the way in which people interact and the personal responsibility. Neighborhoods have become transient in view and are no longer the lifelines to needed supplies or to social activities. With such a rapidly changing social structure, it is small wonder that young people no longer find the conventional concepts of citizenship to be relevant to their lives.

In order to engage youth as citizens and as an essential element of our social fabric, Americans need to rethink the way they operate youth programming and youth involvement within the community. Traditional service learning programs, such as Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts, and school student council programs, arm students with some of the tools required for active citizenship. These programs provide a common language and atmosphere for student-led events and challenges. They also provide an opportunity for young people to explore the world of responsibility via the safety of a prestructured environment. However, such programs also eliminate choices by virtue of their precreated structure, thus limiting the ability to negotiate power within issues that the young people choose to explore. Further, there is little reflection on how the chosen activities affect either the youths' private self-interest or the community as a whole.

Methods for encouraging youth participation in the future must be driven by youth interest. Young people are aware of the issues that impact their communities, but they need to have confidence in their peers and in the adult community. Solutions to community problems will only come from a process of understanding neighborhood structure, networks, dynamics, influences, and resources. Through an effective youth/adult

Gina Zi

partnership, you
toward enacting

There are three
ship: power s
literature is f
tools, youth
tools, power
use of direc
tionary pow

Direct
or group t
speech, "C
direct de
of neigh
responsi
poor sh
also the

Po
specifi
indivi
or fed
accep
indiv
mor
con

is t
in
p
th
v

Gina Zipkin Weisblat, Wendy Slone, and Susan Petrone

145

partnership, youth can take ownership of community problems and work toward enacting their solutions.

Tools for Teaching Youth Citizenship

There are three important aspects to teaching the tools of youth citizenship: power structures, communication skills, and historical context. The literature is full of concrete examples which show that, given the proper tools, youth can effect change in their communities. The first of these tools, power structures, can be defined in the context of three subareas: use of direct democracy for neighborhoods, power distribution, and reactionary power.

Direct democracy is one of the most basic methods for an individual or group to assert its voice in the political arena. Robert Woodson's 1989 speech, "Stabilizing and Revitalizing Urban Neighborhoods" claims that direct democracy is a necessity for the transformation and revitalization of neighborhoods. He further states that collective and individual responsibility is fundamental to making change, saying: "We believe the poor should be empowered to become not only recipients of services, but also the providers and deliverers of these services."⁶

Power structures also include the concept of power distribution, specifically the distribution of knowledge, resources, and rights to all individuals in an equal manner. This process can start at the state, local, or federal level with dissemination of information, funds, and mandatory acceptance of local input. Power is distributed in the neighborhood by individuals sharing information, creating local networks, and becoming more inclusive. Lastly, redistribution of power can be affected by a lack of community renewal.

The last major ingredient that makes power structures so important is the effect of reaction. The literature makes a strong case for individual involvement once he or she has reached the point of direct reaction (a by-product of individual self-interest). Woodson most succinctly summarizes the underlying concept here, saying, "Nobody will do more for us than we are willing to do for ourselves."⁷

The second clearly defined variable that has a bearing on teaching youth citizenship is communication skills. The literature points to an array of issues that may impede or improve communication skills on the

information and important resources are often unavailable to communities. In addition, some communities are not aware of what information is available and lack the experience to find alternative information sources or to effectively process the information if they do have it. Specifically, Jeffres and Dobos explain Davis and Baran's theory of "framing"—essentially how individuals process and learn from everyday situations. They state, "Frames are sets of cues that people use to organize experiences of situations, which can then be used to organize action in those situations."¹¹ Without a set of "frames" for analysis and application of information, communities often find themselves handicapped and at the mercy of local, state, and federal governments.

The last tool for teaching youth citizenship is the historical context in which a community has developed. Neighborhoods bear signs of the past generations and culture that are the blocks upon which they were built. Specifically, each neighborhood did not start with the goal that one day it would be revitalized. Rather, each community began with a clean slate, and its founders helped shape it as parents help shape a child's development. Influences such as cultural background and government economic and social policy played a part in the values and choices made in the shaping and developing of each neighborhood. Youth need to be aware of and learn from the history of their neighborhoods and the neighborhoods of others in order to find effective solutions to current problems.

Effective Youth Programs—Some Examples

The last section of this chapter examines how local groups in Cleveland are currently approaching the challenge of promoting youth citizenship within the community. These programs include the BRICK (Brotherhood, Respect, Intelligence, Conduct, and Knowledge) at Martin Luther King and Franklin D. Roosevelt Middle and Senior High Schools, City Year of Cleveland Youth Corps, and SGORR (Student Group on Race Relations) at Shaker Heights High School. Each of these programs features many of the components outlined as ideal for teaching youth citizenship via a process of civic renewal.

The BRICK program began in 1996 at Martin Luther King Middle School as a faculty-initiated program. Since then, it has expanded as a student-run organization to include older students not only at MLK but also at Franklin D. Roosevelt Middle and High Schools. The mission of

ment, individual emotional management by interacting in constructive activities. Many of the youth who come to the BRICK program lack strong, positive adult role models from whom they can learn socially responsible adult behavior, and much of their contact with mainstream adults is through school classroom learning or the juvenile corrections system. BRICK offers positive male role models and activities that speak to community engagement and is designed to be an alternative to illegal activities, drug abuse, gangs, and teenage fatherhood.

Young people in the group identify the issues that affect their community in a variety of ways. After examining, discussing, and understanding these issues, they then develop workable solutions that can make a difference. The program also provides a format for evaluation and creates a new language of communication for students to understand how to use the tools they have and their community resources to change the inner workings of their communities. BRICK provides an opportunity for young people to work with others to improve their community. Its members also learn responsibility, good communication skills, leadership skills, role modeling, and how to make positive life choices. These all-important nontangible skills can then be transferred into home, school, and work life.

BRICK members meet weekly, and participation includes community service projects as well as a variety of workshops, conferences, and public events. Between the two schools there are currently more than 225 African American young men between the ages of eleven and nineteen in the program.

The second program, the City Year of Cleveland Youth Corps, is a national organization that provides an opportunity for young people between the ages of seventeen and twenty-four years to volunteer for nine months working a variety of areas within the community. Youth who are involved in the program vary in age, race, and socioeconomic backgrounds. Young people in this program receive a weekly stipend and an educational bonus upon completion of the program requirements. City Year provides young people with an opportunity to serve others. Through this service, young people learn how to better take care of a neighborhood, responsibility, how to solve problems that at first appear impossible, how to work with others, how to step forward or step down at the appropriate time, and the importance of respect.

City Year communities are room, tutor student clean a trash-free young adults learn work within the interaction with day Monday through service training communities that valuable to add tax return.

In addition, also assist in serving or the Serve-A-Member members run City Year, all take projects Heroes is a sign a City Year (each year. The mal community how to best involving the

The last an organization that promotes SGORR was noticed that elementary school focus of the were lost.

SGORR expression of run it open form changes an ing, implement

City Year members work in teams of ten to twelve in a variety of communities and projects. For example, they assist teachers in a classroom, tutor students, help a nonprofit agency renovate their offices, or clean a trash-filled area. Through their community service work the young adults learn how to identify issues, map out their environments, work within existing power structures, and evaluate their work and interaction within the community. City Year Corps members work a full day Monday through Thursday on community projects and undergo inservice training on Fridays. Here, the youth learn how to better serve the communities that they are in, evaluate their work, and train in areas valuable to adult development, such as how to write a resume or fill in a tax return.

In addition to the regular weekly projects, youth corps members may also assist in special projects such as Young Heroes, City Heroes, Citzgy, or the Serve-a-thon. Young Heroes is a program that the City Year Corps members run on Saturdays for middle schoolers. It is essentially a mini-City Year, allowing middle school-aged students to volunteer and undertake projects at various nonprofit agencies throughout the city. City Heroes is a similar program geared toward high school students. Citzgy is a City Year Corps member conference held in different City Year sites each year. The conference focuses on sharing information, learning formal community-building techniques, and educating corps members on how to best serve their communities. Serve-a-thon is a day of service involving the community at large.

The last program, the Student Group on Race Relations (SGORR), is an organization of high school students in the Shaker Heights schools that promotes good social relations among racially diverse children. SGORR was initiated in 1983 by a group of concerned students who had noticed that the good relationships enjoyed by blacks and whites in elementary school often did not survive the transition to middle school. The focus of the group was to work with students before those relationships were lost.

SGORR is unique because it was initiated by students in a true expression of citizenship. Because SGORR is student organized and student run it embodies many aspects of youth citizenship. It provides an open format for learning how to negotiate within a structure to make changes and places much of the responsibility on the youth for organizing, implementing, operating, and evaluating the program. The result of

these direct tasks of responsibility is a greater understanding of the tools necessary to practice youth citizenship.

The basic program consists of three days spaced throughout the school year. Concepts such as trust, deferred judgment, prejudice, discrimination, and polarization are covered using the techniques of role-playing, story telling, group discussion, film, and structured exercises. SGORR creates an awareness of race issues, how to identify the problems of peer pressure, and how to utilize particular problem-solving strategies to make decisions when faced with value conflicts.

The goal of the first day's session is to build an atmosphere of trust and support among participants. The second day is devoted to helping them understand the roles that peer pressure and self-image play in influencing behaviors that lead to racial discrimination and social polarization. On the third day, problem-solving methods are taught and are applied to racial, social, and academic issues. Between SGORR visits, classroom teachers use a packet of follow-up activities designed by the high school students to reinforce the classroom lessons.

SGORR members facilitate the sessions and the sixth graders readily accept those older students as leaders and teachers. Anecdotal evidence suggests that high school students can often have a greater impact on younger students than adults. One indication of how deeply the SGORR resonates with middle school students is the increasing number of high school students (nearly 150 a year) who volunteer as SGORR members when they reach high school age.

SGORR is organized into a board (known as the "core") and teams. The board comprises approximately ten to twenty students who serve as team leaders. The leaders and assistants work with six to eight other students as a team throughout the school year. A faculty adviser serves as a consultant and facilitator.

Core members meet with the SGORR adviser to lead their team in preparing presentations for the sixth graders as well as with the sixth grade teachers to discuss a variety of presentation options. The leaders have four meetings with their teams before each workshop to teach and model for them the concepts and strategies offered through the program.

After the teams have made presentations to the sixth grade classes, the teachers meet with the teams for one-on-one feedback. The adviser and the core evaluate their experiences with the sixth graders and begin

Gin
preparing fo
after each s
the curricul
becomes in
of the resul

The su
demonstra
tions to el
make ma
gained ou
program
wide and

SGO
are at a
often br
tainly o
sions er
openly
leading

Youth
neigh
futura
mun
prac
you
As a
unc
exe
ret
mo
ex
er
in

preparing for the next session. Through the process, which is repeated after each session, SGORR members continually rewrite and improve the curriculum. Consequently, each new group of SGORR members becomes invested in the program and is encouraged to assume ownership of the results.

The success of the SGORR program in the Shaker Heights schools demonstrates the importance of racial harmony and good human relations to elementary and high school students. SGORR has been asked to make many presentations to numerous outside organizations and has gained outstanding support as a result of their efforts. In addition, the program has been shared with and adopted by school districts both state-wide and nationally.

SGORR helps students focus on interpersonal relationships, which are at a critical developmental point during adolescence. The group has often brought up issues that might not have been talked about but are certainly on students' minds. Having high school students facilitate the sessions enables younger students to discuss their thoughts and feelings more openly and honestly than they might have were a teacher or other adult leading the discussion.

Recommendations

Youth participation in the discussion of community issues is vital to neighborhood revitalization in the twenty-first century because the very future of neighborhood revitalization is rooted in the youth of the community. In order to make changes and increase the level of youth who practice youth citizenship we must change the way we look at the role of youth within the community as well as the role of our current institutions. As a society, we must make a commitment to provide youth with a strong understanding of what citizenship is as well as practical experience in exercising the ingredients of youth citizenship. Institutions need to rethink the way they interact with youth and, when possible, provide more opportunities for young people to understand their environment, explore potential opportunities, and make decisions which can help others and ultimately improve the well-being of our society.

Since the early 1970s the United States has seen a tremendous decline in the average citizen's level of trust in government, institutions, and the

political process. Citizenship, the practice of rights and responsibilities, has become an institution of rights with few taking responsibility. One social construct that measures citizenship and civic responsibility is voting. Fourteen percent of the country's adult population is made up of young Americans aged eighteen to twenty-four; however, of this population, only 6 percent vote. This trend among young people toward voluntary disfranchisement reflects a lack of education and understanding in civic responsibility. Learning civic responsibility is a process best understood through action. As today's youth take civic courses and must pass civic proficiency tests, they must also have an opportunity to enact the skills and the systems they learn through this process. By not teaching youth citizenship within our communities, we are depriving young people of the tools necessary to take full advantage of all their rights and responsibilities as citizens. As young people become the leaders of tomorrow, an incomplete understanding of citizenship will surely have a negative effect on the progress and success of our country.

Notes

1. Cuyahoga County Juvenile Court, Annual Report, 1994, unpublished.
2. M. I. Singer, T. M. Anglin, L. Y. Song, and L. Lunghofer, "Adolescents' Exposure to Violence and Associated Symptoms of Psychological Trauma," *JAMA* 273, no. 6 (February 1995): 477-82.
3. Lolita McDavid, "One in Four Children Extremely Poor," Children's Defense Fund Greater Cleveland Project, 1992.
4. Children's Defense Fund, *An Opinion Maker's Guide to Children in Election Year 1992* (Washington, D.C.: Children's Defense Fund, 1991).
5. Ruthanne Kurth-Schai, "The Roles of Youth in Society: A Reconceptualization," *The Educational Forum* 52, no. 2 (winter 1988).
6. Robert Woodson, "Stabilizing and Revitalizing Urban Neighborhoods," *Journal of Negro Education* 58, no. 3 (1989): 403.
7. *Ibid.*, 404.
8. See Bruce Anthony Jones, "Collaboration: The Case for Indigenous Community Based Organization Support of Dropout Prevention Programming and Implementation," *Journal of Negro Education* 61, no. 4 (1992): 496-507; Leo W. Jeffres and Jean A. Dobos, "Communication and Neighborhood Mobilization," *Urban Affairs Quarterly* 20, no. 1 (September 1984): 97-112; Edward Crenshaw and Craig St. John, "The Organizationally Dependent Community: A

Gina Zipkin Weisblat, Wendy Slone, and Susan Petrone

153

Comparative Study of Neighborhood Attachment," *Urban Affairs Quarterly* 24, no. 3 (March 1989): 412-34.

9. Crenshaw and St. John, "The Organizationally Dependent Community," 145.

10. Jeffres and Dobos, "Communication and Neighborhood Mobilization," 110.

11. Ibid.

Statement of the Research Question

An accounting of assets has largely been ignored in nonprofit organizations. That is a real disappointment, as most organizations have numerous untapped resources, a plethora of needs, and a shortage of supplies. Understanding this matter will go a long way toward creating a new understanding and depth to our practices in nonprofits. This research is designed to identify organizational assets, determine their influence on organizational effectiveness, and devise training protocols to educate nonprofit leaders about the existence and application of assets in their organizations. We will examine how different types of assets combine to yield greater organizational effectiveness, redefining and using assets to build a more efficient nonprofit. This proposition defines four types of existing assets that when discerned for their individual merit, and then added to other existing assets, can exponentially improve an organization's effectiveness. The literature defines multiple types of capital and explores the usefulness of each. In my work for the fellowship, I will further define these types of capital, and describe how they create an innovative set of tools that organizations can utilize. The goal is to free themselves from dependence on individuals, relying rather on structural foundations that can be put into place. This paper will begin by examining key existing organizational assets as defined by the literature, outside of economic constitution. The model will be based on the underestimated impact of social, human, cultural and latent capital that is present in every organization. I started my research for this paper by testing out some of the ideas during a training session for a large non-profit organization. I also visited over twenty web-sites in an effort to capture an understanding of the current tools available for organizational asset practice. I will share these results, and discuss the study methods that I will use, in an effort to define the model with a stronger theoretical grounding and provide a means to easily operationalize the model for any nonprofit organization.

Questions to be answered

1. Can recognition of organizational assets help nonprofits achieve greater effectiveness?
2. How do the different elements of nonprofits' assets influence organizational effectiveness?
3. Can nonprofit organizational leaders be taught to recognize, deploy and increase organizational assets?

Project's relationship to one or more priority areas: Organizational Effectiveness

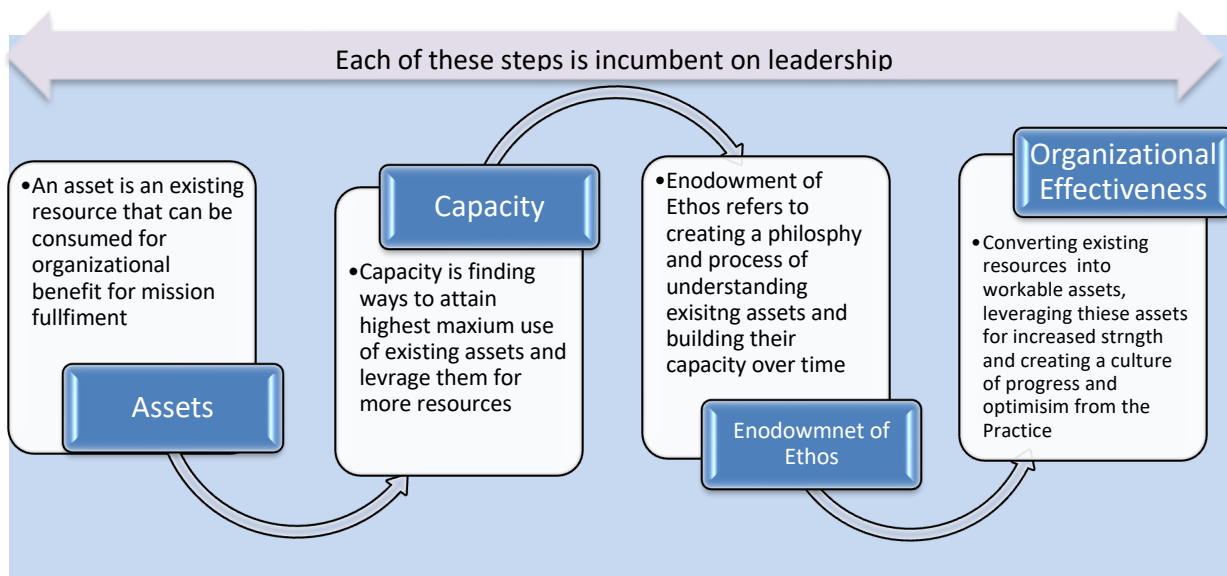
Assets in an organization are akin to the genetic traits of an individual. These genes, if properly activated, help individuals achieve their potential and maximize their efficiency. Often a non-profit organization has assets that are unrealized and underutilized (Weinberg, 1999, Zula and Chermack, 2007). Much time has been spent on capacity building and creating opportunities for new development based upon this process. As a result, with the exception of economic assets, the process of using what already exists is ignored. Asset identification in order to leverage greater success is not a new concept. Kretzman and McKnight constructed an entire theory around asset identification and community building (Kretzman, J. & McKnight, 1993). They were able to draw on the relationship between the individual and the NPO and community, and frame the story from the vantage point of community development and accomplishment. Their work provides evidence that building upon natural assets (those hidden or in full view) can place an organization's recognition of assets ahead of the curve. This paper makes the case that the same set of influences found in the community building and capacity process can be used to create an assessment training protocol and tool kit for organizations, acting as a vehicle to help them reach their full potential. Organizations will thus be better able to recognize their own assets, utilize those assets more efficiently, and embed a natural evaluation process in the discovery. Once organizations recognize their existing assets and how to blend them well, they can in turn increase their capacities and provide a platform for ongoing organizational growth and learning (Fenwick, 2008). This is the key to nonprofit development of core structure, and ultimately greater organizational effectiveness.

An asset is often defined in terms of financials (Sullivan and Sheffrin 2003). The literature speaks to an organization's existing physical attributes or earning potential, endowment and funding. This type of asset has a tremendous influence on the organization's overall ability to be successful, but is dependent on the mission

success and in some ways the leadership and dynamism of an organization. Financial security alone does not lead to organizational success, though it can provide a backdrop for stable mediocrity. For example, an organization may use existing board members and successful projects to leverage long-term endowments and a strong funding base, emphasizing grants, fees and revenue-producing services to the exclusion of their other assets. Having economics drive the mission instead of having a vision drive the mission can handicap an organization's success. Nonprofits have the greatest success when driven by a shared goal and ideology that they can make a difference (Gostick and Elton, 2010). Taking this into account keeps nonprofits true to their mission and assists them in recognizing their natural assets.

The figure below depicts how assets need to be the starting point for organizational effectiveness. Having a better understanding of assets and their blend is crucial to building capacity, a healthy ethos and increased effectiveness.

Figure One: Asset Development for Organizational Effectiveness



Assets versus Capacity

It is important for us to distinguish between an organization's assets and its capacity. A classic example of an organizational asset is its existing social capital. A simple example illustrates this paradigm: suppose NPO worker A can pick up the phone and easily reach the key person at another organization that has a resource, perhaps a space (gym), and worker A's organization can use that asset by merely making the call. In this case, worker A has a direct connection and can leverage that connection on cue to access what is needed. The capacity in this case would differ, in that perhaps worker B may be aware that the space exists and a call could help obtain that space, but there is no expectation or banked capital that would provide for this fluent exchange of unmarked capital. The asset in this case, the social capital, is an unspoken operational resource that provides economic gain for the organization.

It is important to make the distinction that assets define capacity. An asset is what exists at a given moment within the community, and can be used immediately for consumption or leveraged for other gains. On the other hand, capacity is similar to the activation of an existing genetic code. It may exist but lies dormant in the anticipation of usage. For example, an asset might be the existing skill of an individual to use a word processor, i.e. they already know how to use a computer to type a newsletter or communicate important information. Capacity is one's ability to learn that skill, knowing that one can write a newsletter by hand, but hasn't yet been introduced to the alternative mode of communication. Assets exist because they have been learned or are just a

natural strength that is present and available. They are translatable into real capital by their activation and they have the potential to create and build capacity.

The purpose of this proposal is to create a model which takes off from the existing work in community building (Kretzman and McKnight, 1993) and community building and nonprofit capacity building (Chaskin 2001, Light 2004). This paper will focus on four specific capitals that are underutilized in non-profit organizations and can be employed to increase economic capital in the long run. Specifically, we will build an assessment tool that will measure internal social capital, cultural capital, human capital and latent capital on an organizational and structural level. This tool will also provide a mechanism for understanding what capitals exist, and how the blending of these capitals can build organizational capacity and leverage community capacity building to strengthen an organization's own institution. We will also develop a training protocol that can be self-administered and will play off the dynamic of organizational building.

Relationship to relevant scholarly literature

In the book *Click: The Magic of Instant Connections* (2010), the Brafman brothers describe the value and importance of "blend" by drawing on findings from social psychology, organizational behavior, communications, and neurobiology. There is an example from this book that illustrates the model that we will use as the basis for this paper. In the book, they discuss the Florida Gators basketball team that won two college titles. Each of the players came to the team with certain assets, but none were superstars in their own right. Rather, they were above average players who, through good coaching, time spent together, and a common mission, were able to best utilize their individual assets collectively, blend them, increase their capacity, build team aptitude and find the highest level of effectiveness in their realm, a college championship. Interestingly enough, when these players left college, all but one failed to be known or successful on the NBA scene. Each guy struggled to have his assets recognized within his new organization, and because of this could never effectively reach their capacity and help their professional team in the best possible way.

Our model sets aside economic assets, as that is akin to Maslov's hierarchy of needs for survival, and focuses on the assets that exist and if defined and utilized can blend together to help organizations reach their capacity, building an "endowment of ethos" and ultimately greater organizational effectiveness. Assets (again setting aside economic) in this paper will be defined as social capital (bridging, bonding and organizational), human capital, cultural capital and latent capital. The model below depicts assets as existing and immediately consumable efforts or supplies that an organization can provide. Second, the model shows that if assets are recognized and blended they can help an organization increase and reach their capacity. Capacity is defined as having the existing assets and utilizing these assets to their highest potential, employing the understanding that environment will influence process. Third, the model shows an "endowment of ethos" can be achieved if the first two steps occur. Here, an endowment is a financial security blanket for the organization. The "endowment of ethos" refers to the value of the process of steps one and two in creating an institutional history and foundation. If organizations can recognize, utilize and develop their existing assets and blend them for efficiency and effectiveness, then they naturally create an expectation and developmental style, changing the organizational culture and developing a new ethos. If this happens repeatedly, organizations build an expectation and a discipline for working in this style, and they now have a bank (the assets and capacity) to create an endowment of ethos (process, expectation aimed at growth, and full utilization of resources). Lastly, the model illustrates that if these things align, nonprofit organizations, with little outside resources and change agents, can indeed create greater organizational efficiency.

The key to shifting focus from capacity building to asset recognition, from economic assets to a wide array of assets and their influence, is leadership. Leaders who can understand the importance of providing guidance and vision without managing to a fault, will help employees and engaged volunteers use their assets effectively. Chaskin, et al, in *Building Community Capacity*, make a case for strong collaborative leadership by showing how other styles of leadership do not fit within the context of building communities. Chaskin, et al, point out that

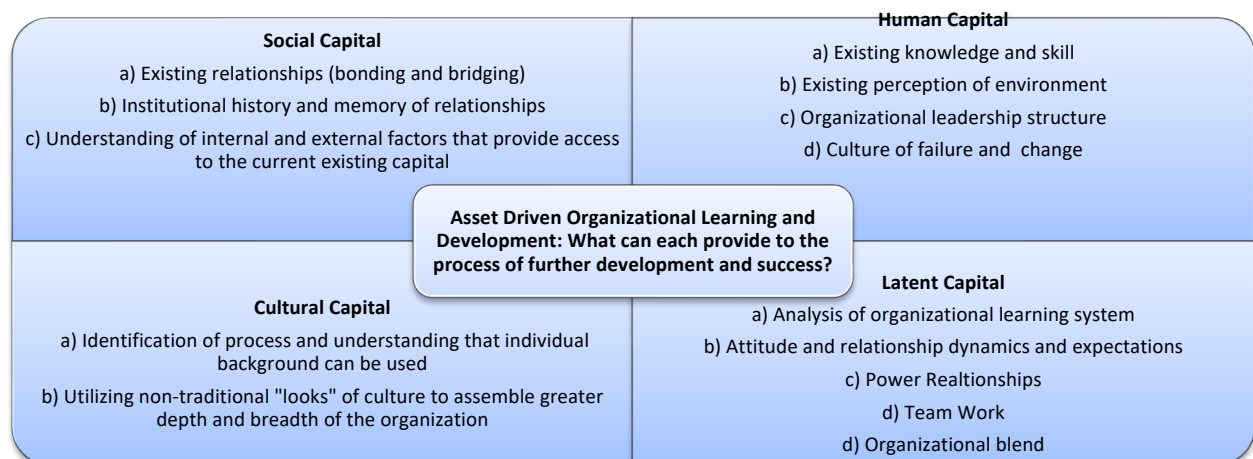
leadership is a contextual construct, meaning that people can have different roles at different times and still fill a void of leadership. Leadership is an essential factor in building capacity. Chrislip and Carson see the role of leadership as engaging others by providing opportunities for individuals to work together, by identifying and locating community stakeholders and facilitating and sustaining the actions of these members. They note, as does Chaskin, that collaborative leadership provides a mechanism for involving and investing multiple members of a community in the process of change. By allowing community members to find a role, build upon it, and lead, it increases the number of resources and connections available, provides more individuals to share the workload, promises that there will be greater agreement on an ultimate vision, and builds trust where it traditionally does not exist. The model below will be used to define our work for this fellowship.

Assets Defined – Social, Human, Cultural and Latent

These defined assets that have been used as a process for community building in the work of Kretzman and McKnight are also relevant to the individual nonprofit organization. Building communities by pulling individual, organizational and collective community assets and capacities together is a frequent theme in the literature about revitalizing struggling neighborhoods (Jennings and Torres, 2007). Revitalization and community change have seen many iterations of programs and services, all of which are ultimately based on the existing capital within those communities and the communities' ability to leverage new capital.

The next section of this paper will describe what we consider, based on the literature, to be the key organizational assets; these assets are structurally static, but depend on an alert and trained leader for their recognition.

Figure Two: A snap shot of the assets from the organizational effectiveness model



Social Capital

Social capital is widely discussed in the literature as an important construct for labeling the utility and effectiveness of relationships. Social capital was first described as the impact that social relationships have in developing and maintaining a healthy society (Hanifan, 1916). The construct was further developed in Bourdieu's work, which identifies social capital as "the aggregate of the actual or potential resources which are linked to possession of a durable network of more or less institutionalized relationships of mutual acquaintance and recognition" (Bourdieu, 1986:246). The concept of social capital provides access through social connections to economic and cultural resources via the relationships and networks that people form (Coleman, 1988). Social capital is a product of individuals' relationship networks and the sum of the resources they contain; it also considers how successfully individuals can set those resources in motion (Putnam, 2002).

The literature describes an array of definitions for social capital. These definitions vary in their association and school of thought from focusing on the individual, as he or she relates to the community, to a

collective consciousness within the community, and the economic implications of these perspectives. To begin, Pierre Bourdieu uses the construct of multiple types of capital (economic capital and cultural capital) to distinguish social capital as its own construct (Bourdieu, 1986). Coleman sees that the group outcomes have an impact on the human and cultural capital that exists. "Social capital is defined by its function. It is not a single entity, but a variety of different entities having two characteristics in common: they all consist of some aspect of social structure, and they facilitate certain actions of individuals who are within the structure" (Coleman 1990, p. 302). Burt and Lin see social capital more within the construct of time, place and space. They define the success of social capital as how it impacts the network (Burt, 1992). Lin is very focused on how the individual impacts the group and delineates the market return for each, the individual and the group.

Social capital also applies to organizations, as to their employees, volunteers, members and stakeholders (Schneider, 2009). Their individual networks, when collectively utilized, can serve as the adhesive that cements organizational success (Torpe, 2003). Organizational social capital is important in converting resources into tangible outcomes (Andrews and Edwards, 2004) and can be converted in many ways to authentic means.

Human Capital

The second construct discussed in the literature as important for successful community building is human capital. Human capital is defined as "the knowledge, skills, and competencies and other attributes embodied in individuals that are relevant to economic activity" (Schuller, 2001). This core of competence, knowledge, and personality attributes are crucial to and are embodied in the ability to perform tasks that produce economic capital (Becker, 1993). Human capital has been defined within two camps of thinking in the field -- "specific" and "general". Specific human capital is outlined as an individual attribute that may contribute to the overall economic stability and success of a community, but has its roots in an individual. General human capital, by contrast, has been defined in terms of a capacity which may be developed or used to have a specific impact on general economic and community development. General human capital may be understood by the following questions: What can a particular set of tools produce, who can yield defined advancing outcomes based on the acquired skills, and what environmental influences may enhance or corrupt this process? Economists have viewed the very nature of human capital as unstable and unpredictable; it is often defined individually or dogmatically within a structured system as opposed to a variable that can be a change agent for improvement if utilized in the correct circumstances.

Human Capital has been categorized in Ryan's paper *Nonprofit Capital: A Review of Problems and Strategies* (2001) paper as: 1) "facilities capital," defined as the funds of the building or acquisition of offices and facilities; 2) "working capital," defined as the dollars used to cover expenses during low cash flow and the funds from which strategic investments will build on the organization's capacity; and 3) "permanent capital," defined as the endowments and reserves that a nonprofit may use to invest in housing and business development. The literature is replete with ways in which economic capital can be leveraged, raised, managed, consumed and multiplied.

Human Capital is an asset that is often muddled with sprinkles of capacity. Human Capital is what the organization already has and the key is how to take this existing asset and blend it with the culture of the organization and the environment in which the non-profit pursues its mission. Another example that clearly depicts the difference between asset and capacity within Human Capital is someone who comes to the organization with a practiced skill such as grant writing or evaluation versus someone who may come to be on staff, and is very eager to learn, but does not yet possess the needed skill set.

Cultural Capital

The third area that is widely discussed in the literature is cultural capital. Cultural capital is defined by Kilbride in his review as "proficiency in and familiarity with dominant cultural codes and practices -- for example, linguistic styles, aesthetic preferences, styles of interaction" (p. 573). Kilbride makes the case that culture is defined by its community and that there is an ability to utilize this experience, knowledge and understanding to gain capital in

general. He notes that Lamont and Lareau (1988) build on Bourdieu and focus the definition of cultural capital from a social capital framework: "[C]ultural capital [is] institutionalized, i.e., widely shared, high status cultural signals (attitudes, preferences, formal knowledge, behaviors, goods and credentials) used for social and cultural exclusion, the former referring to exclusion from jobs and resources, and the latter, to exclusion from high status groups" (1995:156)(Kilbride, 2000). In other words, cultural capital can be an asset that allows entry into a variety of communities based on norms versus traits, and can act as a mechanism to convert social capital or human capital into actual perceptible goods.

Cultural capital provides for easier entrance into communities. Knowing the nuances that exist and using the natural attributes more effectively saves times and builds collective ownership and understanding where trust can run low. Organizations come with certain competencies; recognizing these and applying the knowledge to the algorithm that dictates organizational behavior can increase team play and success (Gostick and Elton, 2010).

Latent Capital

Latent capital will look at assets that exist in the form of institutional memory, team work, attitude, intrinsic motivation, leadership, power dynamics and a sense of commitment to the cause and the organization. Nonprofit organizations are often built on the premise of meeting a goal that cannot be met efficiently in the market. The entire reason for their existence is to fill a gap that cannot be filled by private industry and government. Organizational environment is vital to this mission. In general, people who work for nonprofits do so in part for the meaningfulness aspect of their work, so providing a healthy environment is crucial to mission success difference (Gostick and Elton, 2010).

The central thesis of latent capital is that 'relationships and environment matter'. The fundamental idea is that social networks are a valuable asset, and that those networks coupled with an individual's background (Human and Cultural Capital) and outlook help define one's ability to succeed individually and contribute to the greater good. Interaction enables people to build communities, to commit themselves to each other, and to knit the social fabric necessary to open the doors to successful learning and change.

Latent capital is the integration and application of intangible variables (team work, attitude, etc.) that help convert one's raw material into a usable energy source. That energy must be great enough to overcome the friction that may hamper an individual's ability to learn, and also tap additional sources of potential energy for learning. Having an adequate supply of latent capital is essential for the ultimate learning process to begin. Latent capital is the utilization of social capital (such as networks, norms, and social trust that facilitate coordination and cooperation for mutual benefit (Putnam) and human capital (the knowledge, skills, and competencies and other attributes embodied in the individual) to create an environment ideal for learning and growth. The social capital (bridging and bonding) provides the basis for constructing a community within the walls of the institution, within the greater community and within the classroom of students. It also provides a level of understanding and respected civility, in which the norm is hopefulness, trust, expectation of self and others, and understanding. Activation of this social capital promotes the leverage of tangible and intangible resources into said environment.

Research hypotheses

- H_0 : Are organizations that have a greater number of assets more effective?
- H_1 : How do the different elements of the assets (capitals) of nonprofit organizations combine to achieve effectiveness?
- H_2 : Can nonprofit leaders learn to recognize and blend existing organizational assets through training?

Research methodology/ Project work plan, objectives and detailed grant activities

I will begin by completing a thorough literature search on each defined term (capitals) within the context of the organization. In the dimension of social capital I will look specifically at existing relationships (bonding and bridging), institutional history and memory of relationships, and understanding of internal and external factors that provide access to the existing capital. In examining human capital I will help the organization look at existing knowledge and skills in relation to the prevailing perception of environment, organizational leadership configuration, and the culture of failure and change. The third variable I will help define for organizations is cultural capital. Here I will uncover a process by which individual background can be best utilized to cultivate organizational excellence, and also explore non-traditional "looks" of culture as a means of increasing organizational breadth and depth. Lastly, I will measure a new undefined variable that we will term "Latent Capital". This will allow us to look at the organizational learning system, relationship dynamics and expectations, internal and external power relationship influences, and team work and organizational blend.

The study methodology will draw from both qualitative and quantitative traditions. From a qualitative approach, the research questions will serve to explore the perspectives of the study participants. Quantitative data will contribute numerically descriptive information, primarily to allow for a demonstration of change in the strength of asset training from pre to post intervention.

The second component of the research will include focus groups and interviews. Focus group and interviews will be conducted in a group setting and will be used to obtain a better understanding of participants' perspectives and experiences. Yin defines the purpose of a more in-depth studying the following way, "...it tries to illuminate a decision or set of decisions: why they were taken, how they were implemented, and with what result" (Yin, 1994 p12). By the implementation of this research method, we can look at some of the intangible successes and failures of training that can easily be overlooked (Connell et al, 1995).

The Chart below outlines the objectives, action steps, and methodology and data analysis plan for this proposal.

Chart one: Objectives, Action Steps, and Methodology and Data Analysis Plan

1. Objectives	Action Step	Dates	Methodology and Data Analysis plans
Objective 1.1: Complete a comprehensive literature review of each identified asset in relation to NPOs			
Examine the literature and define human, social, cultural and latent capital in relation to NPOs		10/11 -1/12	Find the most common definitions in the literature Track the definitions that are most similar and consistent
Objective 1.2: Create a scale to measure each asset based on the literature of NPOs			
Take the key variables from the literature and create 5-6 questions for measuring each asset so as to have an integrated statistic		1/12- 3/12	Use the common terms and questions to identify each asset and create a questionnaire with weighed items and the opportunity to create an integrated statistic for each asset. Create a survey on survey monkey to track the respond for all 20 questions
Objective 1.3: Create focus group questions			
Take the key variables from the literature and create 5-6 questions and 3-4 general areas to get NPO leaders' definitions and opinions		3/12- 4/12	Develop 8-10 questions for the focus group. Code the focus group questions and identify patterns that can be seen.
Objective 1.4: Identify 20-30 nonprofits that vary in size based on annual budget and invite them to a focus group			
Build list of NPOs, organize and create divisions based on their annual dollars an		4/12- 6/12	Use United Way's guide First Call for Help to identify organizations and look at their 990s to determine grouping. Contact them and offer free training and participation in the program. Track all contacted nonprofits via a spreadsheet
Objective 1.5: Run three focus groups on asset identification and employment			

1. Objectives	Action Step	Dates	Methodology and Data Analysis plans
Build focus groups based on organizational budget		6/12-7/12	Set up three focus groups with 5-7 members to discuss asset identification variables and plan. Code the focus group questions and identify patterns that can be seen.
Objective 1.6: Build an assessment observation protocol			
Create an observation protocol based on what the literature defines as important attributes of each asset to be studied		7/12	Set up a protocol for observations. Observe an organization for 1-2 hours 2 times before doing the training. Create a file in SPSS for central tendency measures for observations
Objective 1.7: Create a pre and posttest to assess change after training			
Create a survey based on assets, awareness, knowledge and usage		7/12	Develop questions based on the literature, focus groups and pre-study practice. Measure changes in SPSS by using a t-test, based on an integrated variable for each identified asset
Objective 1.8: Do pre-training observations			
Use tool and do observations of 1-2 organizations in all three defined economic		8/12-10/12	Observe site, code data; Identify patterns that can be seen and potential areas for training enhancement
Objective 1.9: Complete pre-training pre-test			
Develop and enter the pretest into survey monkey and create hard copies		10/12	Track pre/post test data; Measure changes in SPSS by using a t-test, based on an integrated variable for each identified asset
Objective 2.0 Create Training			
Use the training format developed in the pre-study stage and create a new iteration based on focus groups, interviews and literature		10/12-11/12	Create a document that indicates the process and content for the training; Make notes on training process
Objective 2.1 Implement Training			
Provide one block of three hours to perform training and two visits to program coordinator post training		12/12-1/13	Provide Training to six sites and follow up support to directors. Make notes on training process
Objective 2.2 Administer Post-test			
Have participants take this after training and again 3 months later		2/13 - 5/13	Have staff complete at the end of the training and via email three months after the training; measure changes in SPSS by using frequencies and t-tests, based on an integrated variable for each identified asset
Objective 2.3: Follow up 3 months later with interviews of the coordinator			
Interview on post-training changes and goals		5/13	Contact each agency and conduct a one hour post interview based on data analysis of the post training assessment; code information and compare new findings to collected information
Objective 2.4 Final Paper Complete			
Write final paper and conclusions with replicable pre/post-test, training guidelines and action steps, and lessons learned. Include data analysis from surveys.		6/13	Incorporate all survey response, observations, interviews and training information and develop a best practice and approach for self-administration of organizational asset development; Write an integrated paper of the process, methods, outcomes and conclusions.

Strengths, limitations, and statistical considerations

In anticipation of this research the investigator completed a focus group with a nonprofit organization that operates an after-school program serving over 300 youth in four schools. The 21 staff participated in the exercise. They were all given the definition of economic, cultural, social, latent and human capital, as outlined below (We excluded economic capital, as this study will focus on the other underutilized and unrecognized organizational capitals.) A) Social Capital is defined as the relationships that exist and are used to leverage organizational success (of mission or site goals) between you, your organization, and your community. This is not limited to professional relationships and it may include those that occur as a result of technology; B) Human Capital is defined as the skills, knowledge and operational abilities that you have that can help your organization leverage organizational success (of mission or site goals); C) Cultural Capital is defined as the experiences or groups that have defined you to the degree that you would identify yourself a part of them – how they aided you in reaching your mission and goals for your organization; and D) Latent Capital is defined as the resources and dynamics that occur and are used that are not easily tangibly measured or observed. In the above example, the staff was given the illustration on “contangion” identified by Christakis in his book Connected, which shows how engagement and teamwork impact performance and success. They were also given examples from Daniel Pink’s book Driven, on intrinsic motivation and purposeful action.

Staff was divided into teams based on their normal site assignment. Teams spent sixty minutes discussing what assets they have and where they lie using the grid below and the above definitions.

Table two: Training Questions

Questions	Human	Social	Cultural	Latent
Please define what assets you have in each area				
Do you utilize these assets in your work environment?				
If no, how could you utilize these assets to support the organizations goals and mission?				
Do you feel that you need more support in any of these areas?				
How are you able to connect with others in your organization to best use these supports?				
How can you connect better to use these assets internally and externally to support the goals and mission of the organization?				

The focus group/training yielded information in the various areas:

- Definitions of the terms were interpreted more broadly than expected. In cultural capacity, staff linked the age differences and experiences as a representation of how to utilize each other’s backgrounds;
- Staff found that economic differences in their backgrounds sometimes drove their decision making and interaction with students and each other. This realization prompted many new ideas of potential ways of program development;
- Organizational, communication, trust and leadership were all communicated as assets that came from human capital. Team members often were able to name their colleagues’ skills and further discussion ensued on how to develop these and better utilize each person’s relevance with their contribution;
- Hidden rules of respect and climate as well value of external and internal relationships based on social interactions that happened at staff retreats were noted as crucial to further develop the team. A certain competency of team developed in this atmosphere;
- Staff were startled that some of their unspoken attributes such as “being a good BS talker” played a role of value in the organization;

- Institutional memory, knowledge of how the pieces and parts of the office work and the general process for staff planning and staff evaluation were all noted as hidden assets that help the organization function at a higher level than “staff actually felt it did”;
- Lastly, staff coined the term “personal energy” as a way to express that negative and positives can occur easily within the environment and that they needed to better utilize their neutral folks to create a better tone.

The intention is for the staff to now build their goals for the following year around the capitals that exist and increase their ownership to the team and the organization internally. The next phase of the training will be setting rubrics based on assets and goals and expected outcomes. Staff will look at the internal organizational process of this specifically with the intent of adding external variables in the next iteration.

Additional Web-Based Research

In seeking to learn if any tools currently resembled the research or measured the same things, we found several categories of help tools for organizations. Opportunities for organizations to assess themselves on their work, their networks, their economic capital, their programs, their process, their boards, their social capital and ability to build capacity was prevalent throughout the web-based research. I examined over 20 sites and found two sites that had excellent tools that would be resources for the basis of this research: 1) The **Nonprofit Assessment Tool** is a free 8 part, 80-item questionnaire that enables organizations to measure their capacity and performance in areas such as administration and leadership, community relations and marketing, and planning; and 2) The **Drucker Foundation Self-Assessment Tool** is an organizational self-assessment guide that helps organizations address five questions: What is our mission? Who is our customer? What does the customer value? What are our results? What is our plan? As part of this research, I intend to continue to research existing tools and pull the vital components out to build a comprehensive organizational asset approach.

Lastly, the most commanding component this work will have to offer is a theory grounded in literature, offering the highest level of academic research, while contributing to the field a practical training protocol and system for organizational effectiveness.

The limits of this work include: 1) restricted initially to a small sample size; and 2) geographically due to financial restrictions the study will primarily be based in one area. However, further research at the conclusion of this study will allow for us to go beyond the anticipated *N* and location.

Interdisciplinary collaboration or addresses diversity issues

This proposed research project will focus on nonprofit organizations serving low-income populations. As the City of Cleveland has the depressed distinction of being one of the nation’s top ten cities in poverty, finding nonprofits that address these issues will not be difficult. The research project will collect data on nonprofits’ economic assets to use as a point of comparison or reference for the work completed in this study.

Bibliography

1. Andrews, Kenneth and Edwards, Bob 2004: Advocacy Organizations in the US Political Process. *Annual Review of Sociology*, 30, 479–506
2. Becker, G. S. (1993). *Human Capital: A Theoretical and Empirical Analysis with Special Reference to Education* (3rd Ed.). Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
3. Bourdieu P, 1986 *The Forms of Capital Handbook of Theory and Research for the Sociology of Education* New York, Greenwood Press p241-258
4. Brafman, O and Brafman, R. *Click: The Forces Behind How We Fully Engage with People, Work, and Everything We Do*. Random House, New York, New York. 2008.
5. Burt, R. (1992) *Structural Holes: The Social Structure of Competition*. Cambridge, MA:Harvard.
6. Chaskin, R. J. (2001). Building community capacity: A definitional framework and case from a comprehensive community initiative. *Urban Affairs Review*, 36, 291–323.
7. Chaskin, R.J., Brown, P, Venkatesh, S.,and Vidal, A. (2001) Building Community Capacity. New York: Aldine de Gruyter.
8. Chrislip, D.D. and Larson, C.E., (1994) Collaborative Leadership: How Citizens and Civic Leaders Make a Difference. San-fransico: Jossey-Bass Publishers.
9. Coleman, James S. (1988). "Social Capital in the Creation of Human Capital", *American Journal of Sociology*. 94 Supplement: (pp. 95-120)
10. Connell, J.P., Kubisch, A.C., Schorr, L.B., & Weiss, C.H. (Eds.) (1995). *New approaches to evaluating community initiatives*. Washington, DC: The Aspen Institute.
11. Christakis, N and Fowler, J. *Connected: The Surprising Power of Our Social Networks and How They Shape Our Lives*, New York: Little, Brown and Company, 2009.
12. Fenwick, T. (2008). Understanding relations of individual–collective learning in work: A review of research. *Management Learning*, 39(3), 227-243.
13. Fitz-Enz, J. (1997). Are your human assets outperforming the market? *Management Review*, 86(2), 62-63.
14. Hanifan, L. J. (1916). "The Rural School Community Center". *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* (67): 130–138.
15. Hitt, D. W. (1995). The learning organization: Some reflections on organizational renewal. *Leadership and Organizational Development Journal*, 16(8), 17-25.
16. Gostick, A and Elton, C. *The Orange Revolution: How One Great Team Can Transform an Entire Organization*. Simon and Schuster, New York, New York. 2010.
17. Jennings, J and Torres, R (2007) *Community-Based Nonprofits in US Inner Cities: Collaborative Strategies for Community Building*. SAGE Race Relations Abstracts, Volume 32, issue 4, p. 5-17

18. Kilbride, K.M. (2000). *A review of the literature on the human, social and cultural capital of immigrant children and their families with implications for teacher education*. Retrieved June 20, 2011: <http://www.ceris.metropolis.net/Virtual%20Library/education/Kilbride2/kilbride2.html>
19. Kretzman, J. & McKnight, J. Building Communities from Inside Out: A Path Toward Funding and Mobilizing a Community's Assets. ACTA Publications, Chicago, IL, 1993
20. Light, P. (2004). Sustaining nonprofit performance. Washington, DC: Brookings Institution Press.
21. Nafukho, F. M., Hairston, N., & Brooks, K. (2004). Human capital theory: Implications for human resource development. *Human Resource Development International*, 7(4), 545-551.
22. Putnam, Robert D. (2000). *Bowling Alone: The Collapse and Revival of American Community*. New York: Simon & Schuster.
23. Ryan, W. (2001) Nonprofit Capital A Review of Problems and Strategies, Rockefeller Foundation and Fannie Mae Foundation. Retrieved June 20, 2011 http://www.community-wealth.org/_pdfs/articles-publications/pris/paper-ryan.pdf
24. Schneider, J. (2009) Organizational Social Capital and Nonprofits *Nonprofit and Voluntary Sector Quarterly* 30 (4).p643-662.
25. Schuller, Tom. 2001. The Complementary Roles of Human and Social Capital. *ISUMA* June 29, 2. <http://www.oecd.org/dataoecd/5/48/1825424.pdf>
26. Shenk, D. (2011) *The Myth of Innate Genius*. Random House, New York, New York.
27. Sullivan, A and Sheffrin, S. (2003). *Economics: Principles in action*. Upper Saddle River, New Jersey 07458: Pearson Prentice Hall. pp. 272.
28. Torpe, L (2003). "Democracy and Associations in Denmark: Changing Relationships Between Individuals and Associations?" *Nonprofit and Voluntary Sector Quarterly*, 32 (3), 329–343.
29. Zula, K. J., & Chermack. T. J. (2007). Human capital planning: A review of literature and implications for human resource development. *Human Resource Development Review*, 6(3), 245-262.
30. Weinberg, A. (1999). The University and the Hamlets Revitalizing Low-Income Communities Through University Outreach and Community Visioning Exercises. *American Behavioral Scientist*, Volume 42, issue 5 (February 1999), p. 800-813
31. Yin, R. (1994). *Case study research: Design and methods* (2nd ed.). Beverly Hills, CA: Sage Publishing.

Articles

**An Exemplar in Mentoring and Professional Development:
Teaching Graduate Students Transferable Skills Beyond
the Discipline**

Gina Weisblat, PhD, MA

Coordinator for the Office of Research of Family and Community Medicine
Northeast Ohio Medical University
Faculty for the Nonprofit Program
Cleveland State University (Urban College) and John Carroll University
National Kresgee Nonprofit Fellow 2011-13
4209 SR 44, PO Box 95
Rootstown, Ohio 44272
Tel: (330) 325-6766
Email: gweisblat@neomed.edu

Christine Sell, MA, CRA

Staff, Graduate Grant Writing Center
Pre-Awards Manager, Office of Sponsored Programs and Research
Cleveland State University
2121 Euclid Avenue PH308
Cleveland, OH 44115-2214
Tel: (216) 687-3624
Email: c.sell@csuohio.edu

Author's Note

The Graduate Grant Writing Center applied for a grant in the 2010 round of the Fund for the Improvement of Postsecondary Education (FIPSE) Comprehensive program, US Department of Education. Parts of this paper are taken from the narrative portion of that grant. This paper is solely the work of the authors and their analysis of the establishment and purposes of a grant writing center for graduate students at Cleveland State University. It does not represent the views or official policies of Cleveland State University. This article is based on a presentation at the Society of Research Administration International Symposium in 2011. The corresponding author is Christine Sell.

Abstract

If university research is to remain a high priority in the national education agenda, graduate students must be prepared to move into research positions. Cleveland State University created the Graduate Grant Writing Center to enhance students' understanding of research principles and ethics, appreciation of the value of collaborations and networks, acquisition of proposal writing skills and experience, and, through practice, well-developed funding search skills. Individual consultations, workshops and mini-courses, electronic resources,

website links, free online courses, plus peer and faculty mentoring are ways in which the Center provides education, resources, and experience to young scholars. The Center began operations in the 2010-11 academic year on an asset-based paradigm, and is overseen and guided by an Advisory Board comprised of university community members, faculty, and graduate students. This paper examines the development of center programs and their impact on students, scholarship, and twenty-first century skill sets.

Keywords: funding, graduate students, graduate research

Introduction

Dante, who in the *Inferno* explores hell, takes careful notes and is able to capitalize on the lessons he learns from others. Understanding and applying lessons from challenging experiences and giving them context provides today's society with the best leaders of our times. Knowing how to maneuver through arduous tasks, staying motivated and committed, and finishing with strength is what Cleveland State University (CSU) believes embodies the very nature of its students. Creating opportunities for intellectual curiosity and advancement by utilizing existing assets can transform our practices in the university community. Assets exist in universities beyond those that we traditionally see (e.g., economic). The university must unlock this capital and employ it for the greater vision and fulfillment of its mission. The use of the Graduate Grant Writing Center (GGWC) by university stakeholders (faculty, staff, and students) employs the same influences found in the community building and capacity process. There are many tools available for organizations to self-assess, build capacity and connect with outside resources. In recent years, most of the literature has focused on capacity.

This paper will show how capacity cannot be achieved or exercised without first recognizing and utilizing existing assets and understanding how these assets blend internally and externally to achieve their maximal use. Learning how to then take this blend of existing assets, and extend it one step further (to capacity) allows us to leverage these assets to create a solid foundation for organizational efficiency and effectiveness. The GGWC has employed this process of utilizing existing CSU assets (faculty, support programs, and student organizations), building capacity through collaborative mentoring and teaching, ultimately establishing a new framework for teaching, and modeling an effective center for 21st century skills within an environment that promotes guidance and skill, trust, and a balanced norm set of integrity and ethics. The Carnegie Perspective provides the nurturing yet firm ethical and normative structure needed to build on existing and new skill sets; increase innovation, creativity and collaboration, and make the most of the potential energy that exists within the framework.

CSU's Mission, Students, and Trends

According to The Commission on the Future of Graduate Education (2010), U.S. graduate education is a strategic national asset. Like all valuable assets, it must be nurtured to remain viable and strong. Strengthening higher education -- specifically graduate education -- is an investment in our future. In a recently released report, the Council of Graduate Schools

Articles

and the Educational Testing Service (Wendler et al., 2010) noted that graduate education faces somber issues, the most critical being low completion rates. Furthermore, between 2008 and 2018, the number of jobs that require a graduate degree will grow by 2.5 million, which translates to a 17 percent increase in those requiring a doctorate and 18 percent in those requiring a master's degree. (Wendler)

CSU is an urban public institution of higher education located in downtown Cleveland, Ohio. CSU is dedicated to creating quality programs; attracting, retaining and graduating students, and helping them to find satisfying career paths in the local economy, thereby increasing the economic growth of the Northeast Ohio region. Consequently, there is an institutional emphasis on professional education that has relevance to the local and regional economies; nearly 85% of the over 100,000 CSU graduates remain in Ohio as leaders in business, finance, government, communications, engineering, education, information technology, law and health – all essential to Northeast Ohio. The idea and practice of interdisciplinary research is a core part of CSU's mission, intertwined with its graduate and professional education programs. The University believes that approaching challenges as opportunities is critical to its success, and thus focuses on its own assets and those of the surrounding community -- drawing on the natural talent, connections and positions that exist. Also vital is the process of building capacity that comes from the success of meeting CSU's mission. The university is distinguished by its recognition that the greatest needs of all its students – graduate or undergraduate, full time or part time, hometown or international -- are stable financial support, connectedness and networks, and strong academic support services that can assist in attaining degree goals and successfully putting those degrees to use.

Nearly 90% of CSU's student population works at least part-time while attending classes. This is a critical factor, as many of our students need financial support to supplement their already rigorous life of work, family and school. Additionally, Exner (2010), in reporting on findings from the Ohio Census Bureau, noted that one out of every three Clevelanders lives in poverty. In 2009 an estimated 35% of the city's population lived below the poverty line – up 5% from the previous year. Cleveland was ranked second (behind Detroit) as the poorest large U.S. city in 2009. Since the majority of CSU's students are from Cleveland and its surrounding communities, the Census Bureau figures have a particular resonance. Located in the center of the city and seeing daily evidence of its students' financial and social conditions, the university has committed to supporting students with funds and, more importantly, support systems to help them to persevere in their studies, obtain degrees, and become effective contributors to the 21st century workforce.

Support Programs –Cultivated as Assets to Support GGWC

CSU support for current and future graduate students is included in the Title III Strengthening Institutions Program (SIP) (First: 2006 – 2011, Second: 2009 – 2014). The SIP provides grants to help eligible institutions of higher education (IHEs) become self-sufficient and expand their capacity to serve low-income students by providing funds to improve and strengthen academic quality, institutional management and fiscal stability. Some

of the programs that CSU offers have built a tremendous foundation for recruiting students to GGWC and providing on-going additional support to their scholarship and success.

Support programs that GGWC has utilized provide continuous assistance to its students through programs and services such as Academic Advising, Academic Skills Sessions, Career Planning Seminars, Cultural Enrichment Opportunities, Computer Application Workshop, Financial Aid Guidance, Graduate School Preparation, Leadership Development, Peer Mentoring, Tuition Assistance, and Tutorial Services.

One such program is the Ronald E. McNair Scholars Program, which provides students with critical academic, research, and professional experiences, including faculty mentors, to enhance competitiveness in gaining admission to graduate programs. Additionally, Graduate Assistance in Areas of National Need (GAANN) funds graduate fellowships in academic programs to assist students with outstanding records and credentials who need financial aid to enroll in graduate programs and pursue the highest achievable degree in their chosen fields, so long as those fields have been designated as areas of national need.

Improving Rates of Diversity By Drawing on Existing Assets

These programs and many others offered at CSU have helped to increase diversity of enrollment while raising persistence and completion rates. However, assistance programs, though they reach many students, do not reach all of them – in fact some programs, by their eligibility requirements, preclude participation by many students. The university, over the last two years, has identified gaps in its service to students (i.e., inadequate funds for a given population), and determined that assets must be cultivated and applied toward graduate degree completion rates and preparation beyond the classroom to ensure career success. The growth of global economies and international learning communities means that traditional notions of what knowledge and skills advanced students need to carry with them into the marketplace are no longer sufficient. In a world that changes daily, expanding graduates’ skill sets is crucial because those skills may quickly become obsolete outside the academy (Ng, Eby, Sorensen, & Feldman, 2005), failing to leverage human capital for career advancement (James, 2000; Sagas & Cunningham, 2004). The task for graduate education in the 21st century will be twofold: (1) to sustain the specialization of the discipline, and (2) to encourage students to initiate and pursue creative avenues within changing industries in this global economy.

Leadership at CSU realized the twin needs of training for career opportunities outside academia as well as mentoring students academically and in ancillary professional development programs to provide the non-academic and critical transferable skills (grant writing, collaboration, peer mentoring, public presentation skills, ethical training in research techniques and practices, and network building) that will prepare master’s and doctoral recipients for a wider range of employment opportunities.

The College of Graduate Studies, at the behest of Dr. George Walker, Vice President of Research and Graduate Studies, began to look for ways to assist students in their search

Articles

for financial support that would help them persist to graduation. A committee of four (Associate Dean of Graduate Studies, Director of the CSU Writing Center, a newly-hired Special Assistant to the Vice President, and the Pre-Awards Manager from CSU's Office of Sponsored Programs and Research) was charged with creating a center that would help students to find external tuition and research dollars and provide them workshops and other forms of assistance to help them persist to graduation and employment. It was through this defining process that the committee recognized the potential of the center to train students in additional skill sets and provide them with individual and group mentoring sessions on such topics as writing skills, research techniques, and partnership building.

Connecting to the Current Issues in Education

Wendler et al. (2010) raised concerns over the declining number of doctoral degrees awarded to U.S. citizens, reporting that in 2007, 57 percent of doctoral degrees in the United States were awarded to U.S. citizens; 20 years earlier, 82 percent were awarded to U.S. citizens. The current percentage of doctoral degrees awarded to U.S. citizens is lower still. Foreign applications, on the other hand, rose by 11 percent in 2011. Two other concerns are the low completion rate for graduate students and the amount of time it takes for those who do complete their degrees. After extensive training, most students are in their early 30s, with life circumstances that can complicate their choices to enroll, persist, and complete degrees. (Wendler et al.)

Additionally, with national trends toward downsizing staff and the professoriate within the academy, it has become apparent that the traditional track of becoming a faculty member after training might not be available to many graduates. Thus, graduate students need better career guidance (Wendler et al., 2010). As the authors observe, "For many doctoral students clear career entry points are lacking, and it is critical to provide career transparency to these students," and "professional development programs at the university that provide doctoral students with transferable skills valued by employers outside of the academy need to be considered. Innovative graduate programs offering internships and financial support from industry also are called for." (Wendler, p. 56)

The committee began its work in late summer 2009 by examining national models. Graduate grant writing and research resource centers exist at many universities, each tailored to that institution's individual needs and operations. The committee examined centers and spoke to personnel at Indiana University, Florida International University, University of California Los Angeles, University of California Berkeley, and University of Pennsylvania. In addition, the committee explored programs and advising centers hosted by professional organizations such as the American Psychological Association. And, as Cleveland is home to one of the five National Foundation Centers (a vital grantsmanship service organization for information and skill building), it was recognized early on that Cleveland's Center would become a strategic partner in the CSU effort. The committee also read various reports about the future of graduate education from the Council for Graduate Schools, Educational Testing Services, and other sources. The committee soon found that CSU was not alone in experiencing problems in funding, persistence, and graduation. Across the nation, schools

were struggling with retention, rising tuition costs, decreasing federal funds, and the need to acquire more meaningful support of graduate education.

In some ways, determining what the solution ought to accomplish for CSU students required a general understanding of what graduate programs at universities should do for their students. By developing an understanding of such needs as defined by students, the committee identified several areas of potential action. The committee determined that it could not help students with daily academic needs such as finding advisors, choosing electives, or finding courses appropriate to their interests. Nor could it provide students advice or solutions to family and relationship problems. It could, however, refer students to the right places for these services so that they would be better able to meet the rigorous demands of certain nonacademic skills critical for growth in the 21st century.

From its examination of reports from the College of Graduate Studies Admissions department, the committee identified areas in which the center might take effective action. For example, support issues that affect students include state of the art equipment for writing and research. The need to balance school, work, and family relationships involves effective time management. Moreover, the growing diversity of university populations requires that graduate and undergraduate programs must provide for special assistance and academic and social support for significant numbers of minority or international students who find themselves in an academic and social milieu that may be unfamiliar. The need for acquiring skill sets beyond the discipline, including research methods; writing skills; ethics, technology and computer skill training, along with interview and conversational English skills – developed with peers and advisors. Language and writing skills are important to students who are preparing papers, conducting research, and need assistance with academic or research grant writing.

Beyond these are other skills that are important to academic and career growth, such as grant seeking and writing, exposure to or information about nonprofit agencies and foundations, and workshops that prepare students to take licensure exams in those professions that require them, e.g., social work and teaching.

One critical support for students is in academic achievement, such as providing tutors for non-traditional students, and research mentors – both peer and faculty. Workshops teaching skills, sessions with tutors, and other events must address students in their social and academic contexts. That is, increased services must be provided at non-traditional times such as during weekends and evenings, and flexible daytime slots so that all graduate students can access skills development – no matter what their academic schedules, employment arrangements, and lifestyle commitments. These diverse offerings must be provided in the various campus locations the students frequent.

Addressing students' needs in the 21st century requires understanding their increased financial needs that must be met through tuition and living assistance via stipends, scholarships, remission of parking and other fees, transportation assistance, free

Articles

and affordable campus services, grants and awards for research expenses, employment opportunities, and paid internships to help defray the costs of schooling. Universities must recognize that graduate assistantships are too few and do not address the depth and breadth of student needs.

One area of need that cannot be ignored and whose importance grows daily is the creation and sustaining of social networks that connect students to community resources. Universities must take the time to identify agencies that will help with career advancement, job placement, job searches, and other issues, such as providing graduate lounges on campus allowing students to interface with each other and work on projects individually or collaboratively. Faculty and staff need to continue developing their efforts toward fostering cordiality and collegiality when dealing with graduate students.

Careers in the 21st century will increasingly require students to link to communities and industry. This does not necessarily preclude a career in the academy, but it may indicate a changing role for scholars as they work in a university environment that includes these external partnerships. The committee decided that to provide students with viable career paths to industry and elsewhere, including higher education, skills that are deemed marketable and transferable outside the academy have equal value within the 21st Century university. Thus, the committee decided to create a center, not unlike many others it had identified at universities around the country, to teach graduates various skill sets. This idea was consistent with preferences and recommendations existing in The College of Graduate Students, which had for some time identified the acquisition of grant-making skills as an essential part of a doctoral candidate's academic training. The committee recommended to the Vice President and to the College of Graduate Studies the establishment of the GGWC, which would present workshops on various topics during the academic year to acquaint students with outside fellowships and other support programs, and to impart to them the skills needed to write successful proposals to acquire grants.

Mentoring in the Center

In the 21st century it is imperative that we shift our learning and teaching paradigm from an individual effort to an inclusive one comprising shared experiences with the collective and with multiple individual contributions to the greater group. This shift requires changing the model of pedagogy and the production of knowledge to alter the way we do things interactively at the university, within the community and with today's learners and workers. The GGWC has taken the prototype of the center and integrated the asset-based paradigm to utilize existing university and community talent for the development of mentoring-focused programming. Specific underpinnings of this effort relate to the need to create kinesthetic experiences with problem-based real world exercises that allow for collaborative and transparent co-learning and mentor-based direction. Table 1 catalogues some of the activities and programs that the GGWC has implemented as a part of this engaged learning experience.

Essential to the success of this model is the engagement of students in exercises and events that will broaden their capabilities and ensure their commitment to progress to graduation and employment. Critical to this goal is the participation of faculty and staff members in the mentoring and teaching of research and grant-writing skills, as well as the ethical underpinnings of research methods and report writing.

Table 1: Mentoring Types, Activities, and Outcomes

Mentoring Types	Operationalization	Contextual Action	Outcome
One on One	We meet regularly with the student through process of identification of sources, funders, plan and application.	This is accomplished on-site, via email, regular appointments and follow up meetings with students and faculty (when appropriate).	Grant completion and follow-up iterative process of additional grants, certification and developed skill set.
Small Group	We meet with a faculty member and a small group of students and co-mentor both through the process of writing the proposal collaboratively.	Faculty member usually organizes the group and we meet with them as a team, teach process, aggregate the division of labor and revise the proposal as a team.	Collaborative grant writing and intellectual exercises to deepen group "habits of mind"; grant completion and developed skill set and social capital.
Integrated Group	We meet with practitioners, faculty, students and community members to build a "community" effort grant. The outcome is based on a project with scholarship as the underpinning effort, but community focused.	This is held in the community or on campus and there asset number of formal meetings and then meeting with potential funders to ensure process meets needs of the outcome. GGWC staff facilitates and builds the connections and funding relationship.	Community engagement with the university –tearing down of the figurative "ivory tower"; collaborative grant writing and intellectual exercises to deepen group "habits of mind"; grant completion and developed skill sets and social capital.
Apprenticeship	We offer "HIGH SCHOLAR" students the opportunity to work closely with one faculty member or the Director of the center to engage in the rigorous process of a University based proposal.	Student works intensely for a period of 3 months with the faculty or Center director and is engaged in high-level university meetings. Also individual interpretation and teaching by experience takes place.	Students have learned to write high level academic grants, built new "habits of mind" and increased their social, human and cultural capital.
E-Engagement	Students take part in an e-learning course and have regular distance learning interaction with center staff and complete the entire iteration of search, program definition, grant application and submittal electronically.	This whole process is done via the Internet.	Grant completion and follow up iterative process of additional grants, certification and developed skill set.

Articles

The Model

This model represents the underpinning theory of the GGWC -- an asset-based paradigm that focuses on the process as an outcome. Specifically, it first takes the existing assets of social, latent, cultural, and human capital and blends them together to create a base for a shared experience and success. These specific capitals were blended: (1) social capital encompassing the relationships that the GGWC had within the University and the community at large; (2) cultural capital, which includes the knowledge of how to work within the context of the University and the larger community; (3) human capital comprising the skills that CSU graduate students have when they come to the Center and understanding how to leverage these with the existing skills at the university or virtually through other universities to enrich skill sets; and (4) latent capital (Weisblat, 2011), which is our ability to utilize internal knowledge assets, community needs and learning tools in creating a new level of scholarship and research capabilities and skills applicable in the 21st century learning and work arenas to further leverage our indigenous resources at the university.

Second, we looked at how to build capacity from this process. We wanted to create innovation, curiosity, collaboration and an open system of learning to foster our students as they grew in new areas of competency. In this process, we were able to utilize the Internet to strengthen our connections, to underpin our community's needs, and to create a deeper understanding of research and scholarship principles and practices.

The third step in the process was the contextual action phase. Here, we asked our students to apply their learning and the iteration process to CSU and the greater community by filling out applications and reviewing the guidelines and action steps for completion each step of the way. We leveraged their assets to build their capacity and then operationalized the process by identifying their strengths and playing to them in the progression. This step was accomplished through group sessions and in private, mentored blocks spanning several meetings between students and center experts.

Lastly, to create credibility and build the GGWC, we had to sustain the work that we had done and share it openly with other students, while maintaining transparency with the faculty to ensure continued trust and credibility. In addressing sustainability, we ensured connection to our shared mission (via on-going support and assistance) and open communication with faculty and other scholars to improve the scholarship and build the interdependence and reliance on each other while recognizing that learning is a collaborative process. We also encouraged faculty to explore scholarship with their students as an iterative and learning process. This exploration was accomplished through relationships between students and faculty members or through meetings with faculty members to explain the goals and processes of the center and invite their participation in programs.

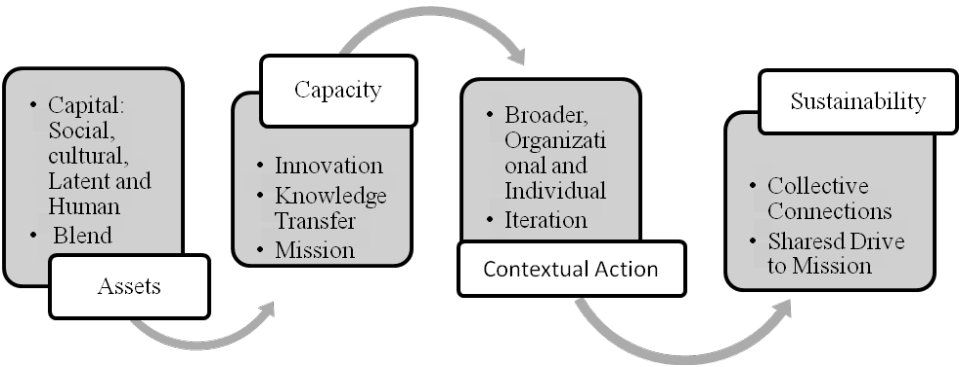


Figure 1. Asset-based paradigm model (Weisblat, 2011).

This process drove outcomes that increased openness, transparency, and collective thinking, and leveraged multiple and inter-disciplinary skill sets. This allowed for us to continue to revisit each piece of the model. The leadership style must be collaborative and hold integrity to build on all existing assets and create a new paradigm for learning and learning outcomes in the 21st century.

Intellectual Underpinnings

An organization’s assets are akin to the genetic traits that help individuals achieve their potential and maximize their efficiency. Only a few scholars have looked at nonprofit assets, and their focus has been peripheral. Often a nonprofit organization has assets that are unrealized and underutilized. Weinberg (2005) pointed out the importance of organizational assets, but focused not on what those assets were, but rather on the need for an intermediary to translate those natural assets into workable capital. In business models, many people have noted the importance of intellectual and knowledge capital for success (Delgado-Verde et al., 2011). Much time has been spent on building capacity and creating opportunities for new development based on this process. Asset identification to leverage greater success is not a new concept at the community level, but it is at the organizational level, and that is what was developed in this center. In constructing a theory around asset identification and community building, Kretzman and McKnight (1993) drew upon the relationship among the individual and the non-profit organization (NPO) and community, framing their story from the vantage point of community development and accomplishment. We define organizational assets aggregated from the literature as social, human, cultural and latent capitals. Examples in the literature ground each of these components as present but not usually recognized in organizations.

Ancillary to the major point of this paper, it is critical to remember assessment of effort and to understand that the same set of influences found in the community building and capacity process can be used to create an assessment training protocol for center staff and a tool kit to help the organization reach its full potential. Moreover, consistent use of

Articles

the assessment tools becomes embedded over time as a habit of mind, one of the overarching goals of the center: to teach students that process, through repeated iterations, is in itself an outcome that leads to success. Students (and indeed organizations) will thus be better able to recognize their own assets and utilize them more efficiently. Once students recognize their existing assets and how to blend them well, they can in turn increase their capacities and provide a platform for ongoing growth and learning. With this new knowledge, students, as well as nonprofit organizations such as the center, will begin to incorporate asset discovery and assessment processes as a standard habit of mind, a new ethos equally applicable to individual and organizational asset recognition and implementation. This ethos, along with the increased capacity, identification, and implementation, helps students to increase their effectiveness in research projects, skills acquisition, and career attainment.

Organizations often define assets in terms of financials (Sullivan & Sheffrin, 2003), but the same can be applied to the goals of the students participating in center programs. However, financial security alone will not lead to success, though in terms of organizations, it can provide a backdrop for a great deal of entropy as a result of the structure of non-profit funding. For example, an organization may use existing board members and successful projects to leverage long-term endowments and a strong funding base, emphasizing grants, fees and revenue-producing services to the exclusion of their other assets; this can put an agency in peril quickly if something changes the funding stream on which they depend.

The same scenario can apply to the graduate student solely dependent on scholarship or fellowship money or on skills that serve only the profession for which the student is training, with the expectation that he or she will obtain employment in the field – which may not be the case. Different tools must be developed and at hand to meet many or all eventualities. This blend -- realization of internal and external supplementary assets -- is imperative for effectiveness. Nonprofits (and students) have the greatest success when driven by a shared goal and ideology that they can make a difference (Gostick & Elton, 2010). Taking this into account keeps nonprofits true to their mission and assists them in recognizing their natural assets. The GGWC keeps these principles in mind as it designs programs for its constituents.

Our model sets aside economic assets and focuses on the other assets that, if defined and utilized, can combine to help our university and its students reach their various capacities, thus building an *ethos of asset recognition*. We define GGWC assets as social capital (bridging, bonding, and organizational), human capital, cultural capital and latent capital. The model illustrated in Figure 2 depicts assets as existing and immediately consumable efforts or supplies that an organization can provide. Second, the model shows that if assets are recognized and blended they can help an organization increase and reach its capacity. We apply this same model to the individual students working through the GGWC to attain their highest levels of learning and skill development. Third, the model shows that an asset ethos can be achieved if the first two steps occur. The asset ethos refers to the value of the process of steps one and two in creating an individual history and foundation. That is, if GGWC participants can recognize, develop and utilize their existing assets and blend them

One additional important note to the model is leadership. The key to shifting focus from capacity building to asset recognition, from economic assets to a wide array of assets and their influence, requires leadership. Leaders, or mentors, who can understand the importance of providing guidance and vision without micro-managing will help students acquire, develop, and use their assets effectively.

Balancing Assets with Capacity Building at the Center

It is important to realize that assets define capacity. An asset is what exists at a given moment within the community, and can be used immediately for consumption or leveraged for other gains. On the other hand, capacity is similar to an existing genetic code, which may exist but lies dormant in the anticipation of usage. Capacity is the ability to learn a skill that relies on a source to unleash that ability. Assets exist because they have been learned or are just a natural strength that is present. Translatable into real capital by their activation, they have the potential to create and build capacity.

The assets that have been used as a process for community building are defined in the work of Kretzman and McKnight (1993). Building communities by pulling individual, organizational and collective community assets and capacities together is a frequent theme in the literature about revitalizing struggling neighborhoods (Jennings & Torres, 2007). Revitalization and community change have seen much iteration of programs and services, all of which are ultimately based on the existing capital within those communities and their abilities to leverage new capital.

Articles

The GGWC relies on bringing together the members of the university communities to leverage new results for their graduate students. Success in acquiring external funding, refining writing skills, and developing ethical research tools, habits and skills, are all new capital that increases institutional capacity and effectiveness.

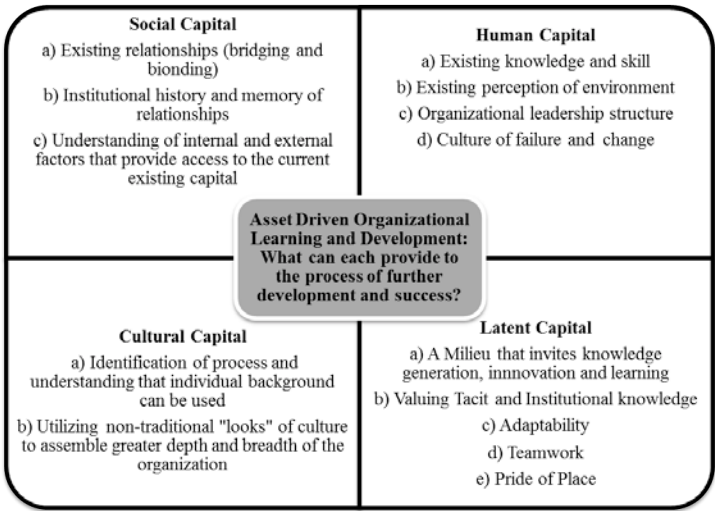


Figure 2. Nonprofit organizational effectiveness model: assets and identifying features.

Social Capital

Social capital is widely discussed in the literature as an important construct for labeling the utility and effectiveness of relationships. The concept of social capital provides access through social connections to economic and cultural resources via the relationships and networks that people form (Coleman, 1988). Social capital is a product of individuals' relationship networks and the sum of the resources they contain; it also considers how successfully individuals can set those resources in motion. (Putnam, 2000)

The literature provides an array of definitions for social capital. These definitions vary in their association and school of thought from focusing on the individual, as he or she relates to the community, to a collective consciousness within the community, and the economic implications of these perspectives. Bourdieu (1986) used the construct of multiple types of capital (economic and cultural) to distinguish social capital as its own construct. Coleman (1990) observed that group outcomes have an impact on the human and cultural capital that exist:

Social capital is defined by its function. It is not a single entity, but a variety of different entities having two characteristics in common: they all consist of some aspect of social structure, and they facilitate certain actions of individuals who are within the structure. (p. 302)

Burt and Lin placed social capital within the construct of time, place and space. Burt (1992) defined the success of social capital by its impact on the network, while Lin (2001) focused primarily on how the individual impacts the group and delineates the market return for both the individual and the group.

Social capital has been linked to helping government transformation, improving school performance, and having an impact on economic performance, health and well-being, and crime (Halpern, 2005). Social capital also encompasses organizations, their employees, volunteers, members, and stakeholders (Schneider, 2009). Their individual networks, when collectively utilized, can serve as the adhesive that cements organizational success (Torpe, 2003). Organizational social capital is important in converting resources into tangible outcomes (Andrews & Edwards, 2004) and can be converted in many ways to authentic means.

The GGWC views social capital as an asset most likely untapped by our students yet one that is critical to their success. Training and discussion at the center deal with the identification of social networks and their relationships to academic achievement and success. Development of social networks is encouraged in mentoring programs and taught in GGWC workshops. Students are provided with handouts and charts to help them identify resources and human capital and to plot those assets in a format that helps them understand how to employ social capital to achieve their goals.

Human Capital

The second construct confirmed by the literature as important to successful community building for the GGWC is human capital, defined as the skills, expertise, competencies, and other characteristics that an individual expresses are relevant to economic activity (Becker, 1964; Schuller, 2001). This core of competence, knowledge, and personality attributes is crucial to and embodied in the ability to perform tasks that produce economic capital (Becker, 1993). Human capital has been defined by the field as either specific or general. Specific human capital is an individual attribute that may contribute to the overall economic stability and success of a community, but has its roots in an individual (Florin et al., 2003). General human capital, by contrast, has been defined as a capacity that may be derived or used to have a specific impact on general economic and community development. General human capital may be defined by answers to the following questions: What can a particular set of tools produce, who can yield defined advancing outcomes based on the acquired skills, and what environmental influences may enhance or corrupt this process? Economists have viewed the very nature of human capital as unstable and unpredictable; it is often defined individually or dogmatically within a structured system as opposed to a variable that can be a change agent for improvement if utilized in the correct circumstances.

Human capital has been categorized by Ryan (2001) as: 1) facilities capital, defined as the funds of a building or acquisition of offices and facilities; 2) working capital, or the dollars used to cover expenses during low cash flow and the funds from which strategic investments will build on the organization's capacity; and 3) permanent capital, defined as

Articles

the endowments and reserves that a nonprofit may use to invest in housing and business development. The literature is replete with ways in which human capital can be leveraged, raised, managed, consumed, and multiplied.

Translating human capital into a workable asset is central to using existing assets for change, and dependent on knowledge and leadership. (Frese, 2005) Human capital is what the organization already has; the key is how to take this existing asset and blend it within the culture of the organization and the environment in which the nonprofit pursues its mission. An example that depicts the difference between asset and capacity within human capital is someone who comes to the organization with a practiced skill such as grant writing or evaluation, versus someone who may join the staff, is very eager to learn, but does not yet possess the needed skill set.

Cultural Capital

Cultural capital is defined by Kilbride (2000) as “proficiency in and familiarity with dominant cultural codes and practices -- for example, linguistic styles, aesthetic preferences, styles of interaction” (p. 573). Kilbride makes the case that culture is defined by its community, and that this experience, knowledge and understanding may be used to gain capital in general. He notes that Lamont and Lareau (1988), building on Bourdieu, frame the definition of cultural capital within a social capital framework:

Cultural capital [*is*] institutionalized, i.e., widely shared, high status cultural signals (attitudes, preferences, formal knowledge, behaviors, goods and credentials) used for social and cultural exclusion, the former referring to exclusion from jobs and resources, and the latter, to exclusion from high status groups. (Kilbride, p. 5)

In other words, cultural capital can be an asset that allows entry into a variety of communities based on norms versus traits, and can act as a mechanism to convert social capital or human capital into actual perceptible goods. (DiMaggio & Mohr, 1985)

Cultural capital provides for easier entrance into communities. Knowing the nuances that exist and using the natural attributes more effectively saves times and builds collective ownership and understanding where trust can run low. Organizations come with certain competencies; recognizing these and applying the knowledge to the algorithm that dictates organizational behavior can increase team play and success. (Gostick & Elton, 2010)

Cultural capital is an area in which the GGWC provides needed assistance to students who may not have strong writing skills, who probably have little exposure to corporate cultures, who may have limited English language proficiencies, and who have limited exposure in research and research ethics in their educational experiences prior to graduate school. It is in these areas that the center has strong impact. The center uses the same methods to develop cultural capital for and with students: workshops, individual

work sessions, faculty mentor relationships, community partnerships and speakers, informal conversation groups and special writing assistance workshops through our partnership with The CSU Writing Center re-enforce for GGWC participants the importance of this asset.

Latent Capital

Latent capital has been defined within the realm of nonprofits in a myriad of ways, but never under a central premise. Often the characteristics of latent capital are defined in a variety of articles as the interplay of social capitals, organizational learning, and effective leadership. In the literature on business innovation, efficiency and operation, a similar construct has been identified as knowledge capital. Knowledge capital has been described as a mix of intellectual capital and practical skills, and is understood in this field as a key organizational factor for effectiveness (Darroch, 2005). At times, knowledge capital is separate in the literature from intellectual capital. It is important to make these distinctions, as there are many studies that combine or highlight one or another. Intellectual capital (Sanchez et al., 2000) is often formed from the constructs of human (Subramaniam & Youndt, 2005), social (Putnam, 2000), and structural capital (Edvinsson & Malone, 1997). For purposes of this paper, we will define latent capital as a mixture of organizational contentment, organizational plasticity, organizational knowledge and wisdom, organizational team playing, and team esteem.

The central thesis of latent capital is that relationships and environment matter. The fundamental idea is that social networks are a valuable asset, and that those networks coupled with an individual's background (Human and Cultural Capital) and outlook help define one's ability to succeed individually and contribute to the greater good. Interaction enables people to build communities, to commit themselves to each other, and to knit the social fabric necessary to open the doors to successful learning and change. All of these facets are integrated into every program and element of the center. Underlying each event and meeting is the notion of creating community in a way that invites students to share experiences, knowledge, contacts, and information. Whether through an informal coffee and conversation event or in a more formal presentation of research ethics and methods, the center staff focuses on an environment that is open and relaxed, and that communicates on all levels that students are a respected part of the university community, their ideas and skills are appreciated, and the center staff is here to assist them as they develop more skills and capabilities.

Furthermore, the center sees the theory of latent capital as the chief informant of its approach to teaching students a new way to think about education – as a team effort that involves faculty, staff and students. Space is given in interviews, gatherings, and even email communication for the student and members of grant and research teams to express their views on the project in their own best way. Latent capital is the integration and application of intangible variables (team work and attitude, e.g.) that help convert one's raw material into a usable energy source. That energy must be great enough to overcome the friction that may hamper an individual's ability to learn, and also tap additional sources of potential energy for learning. Having an adequate supply of latent capital is essential for the ultimate learning process to begin.

Articles

Latent capital is the utilization of social capital (such as networks, norms, and social trust that facilitate coordination and cooperation for mutual benefit (Putnam, 2000) and human capital (the knowledge, skills, competencies, and other attributes embodied in the individual) to create an environment ideal for learning and growth. The social capital (bridging and bonding) provides the basis for constructing a community within the walls of the institution, within the greater community and within the classroom. It also provides a level of understanding and respected civility, in which the norm is hopefulness, trust, expectation of self and others, and understanding. Activation of this social capital promotes the leverage of tangible and intangible resources.

Organizational Effectiveness

The role of the CSU GGWC is similar to that of any NGO or nonprofit: to meet the needs of constituents for whom the economy fails to provide efficiently. Given this, the mark of organizational effectiveness of our center can be measured and is within the literature on nonprofits. Some argue that nonprofit organizational effectiveness is based on comparison or benchmarking with similar organizations (Herman & Renz, 1999). Stone and Cutcher-Gershenfeld (2002) reviewed the empirical literature and pointed to several markers as central to defining effectiveness; more applied studies have also added to the composite of terms that defines this construct. Organizational effectiveness can be measured in many ways. For the purpose of our center, we measure effectiveness based on reaching organization-set goals with increased success based on asset recognition – that is, on students acquiring outside financial support for research and education, for positive and measurable change in writing skills, for the effectiveness of research teams that include our students, and for the numbers of students who complete our courses -- whether for credit or simply through the GGWC workshop programs.

Leadership

Chaskin, Brown, Venkatesh, & Vidal (2001) make a case for strong collaborative leadership by showing how other styles of leadership do not fit within the context of building communities. They point out that leadership is a contextual construct, meaning that people can have different roles at different times and still fill a leadership void. Leadership is an essential factor in identifying assets, building capacity, creating an asset ethos and ensuring organizational effectiveness. Chrislip and Larson (1994) see the role of leadership as engaging others by providing opportunities for individuals to work together, by identifying and locating community stakeholders, and facilitating and sustaining the actions of these members. They note, as does Chaskin et al, that collaborative leadership provides a mechanism for involving and investing multiple members of a community in the process of change. By allowing organizations to follow this model and build upon it, and lead, it increases the number of resources and connections available, provides more individuals to share the workload, promises that there will be greater agreement on an ultimate vision, and builds trust where it traditionally does not exist.

Volume XLIII, Number 1, 2012 77

Articles

programs will be developed once more students have experience with writing grants to agencies and foundations – and especially as they receive awards for their efforts.

Staff is developing meeting sessions in which students will be coached on how to employ tools to focus their research, their searches for funds, their pursuits of partnerships and mentors, and their career plans. The Center provides opportunities and paths, such as information and informal conversation sessions to increase faculty-to-student and student-to-student mentoring, collaboration, and network building, and also assist the university as it creates natural intellectual communities that are diversified and serve as a vital training mechanism for skill building in collaboration, leadership, integration and practical application (grant writing).

The very nature of the Center’s program addresses the formation of these principles and serves as an active measure to reconsider apprenticeships and methods for improving success rates for the more diversified employment opportunities after graduate school and more diverse student populations. Application of these principles will occur in a required process in which graduate students will participate. Students, overseen by faculty or staff mentors in their training, research, peer review process, and applications will develop increased human and social capital, thus generating the underpinnings for a long-term intellectual community, a process of rigorous intellectual application, collaboration, and metacognition – all vital skills needed for success in graduate school and for a 21st century career. (Walker, Golde, Jones, Conklin, Bueschel, & Hutchings, 2007)

Conclusion

Although the Center has been conducting business for only one and one-half semesters, it is achieving results. Students are applying for funding, partnerships are forming on campus, and faculty members are assuming voluntary mentorships. GGWC staff has realized that encouraging students to apply for external funding and asking them to attend training sessions is helpful but adds more stress to their already stressful existence. Asking students with crowded schedules to make room for additional activities held at specific times and locations makes it difficult for them to juggle class, research, work and other responsibilities.

The GGWC has instituted Office Hours in each college so that students in need of help may receive it right within their college. As Office Hours is open ended, students set the agenda. They use these sessions to ask questions, seek assistance and advice about funding, receive critiques and advice about grant proposal drafts and budgets, and make arrangements to attend formal workshops and schedule individual private interviews with Center staff. While Office Hours is held at each college, the sessions are open to all graduate students, allowing them maximum access to Center personnel.

We further realized that the Center could offer undergraduate students and the university itself a necessary service. By including junior and senior undergraduates in programs, GGWC is able to help CSU build for the future by encouraging enrollment

in graduate programs and ways to seek outside funding to defray those costs. Moreover, working with our undergraduates means the Center is approaching graduate education in a more responsible manner. That is, we are helping our students to learn about fiscal responsibility and strategic planning. We have begun that process by instituting a summer learning program for the members of our McNair program. Over this past summer a series of four class sessions were offered to about 20 undergraduate students who were given the opportunity to expand a research project that they had proposed to the McNair program at CSU. To carry out the project, the students needed to find funding, and, in some cases, partnerships within the community. The students who attended the sessions learned the basics about grantmaking, grantwriting, funding sources and funding searches. They receive an invitation to come to the GGWC for individual assistance and coaching. They visited the Foundation Center, Cleveland for a private tutorial geared to their needs and explaining how they might leverage the myriad resources at the Center and on its web site. They learned how to use FC Online as well as the books, brochures and other resources in the Foundation Center, Cleveland library.

By directing our attention to our graduate students in a one-on-one interview session, the Center has been able to realize that not all students are as prepared for the graduate experience as others. Many students exhibit social and civic inexperience. They have very little experience of the world outside their neighborhoods, their high school, or small groups of friends at the university. A number of students are not familiar with the city itself and have little exposure to Cleveland's many civic organizations. Both the university and the GGWC anticipate that, during their time at CSU, graduate students will avail themselves of the programs and resources found at the Center to make them more rounded citizens, capable members of the Greater Cleveland economic community, and actively engaged in the civic and social life of Greater Cleveland. Thus, the Center is aware of the need to bring the city to the campus. Staff are developing partnerships with local foundations, and the university has created partnerships with the Cleveland City Club, Playhouse Square, the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame and Museum, and various other discipline-driven institutes such as The Ohio Aerospace Institute. Center staff plans to work with these entities to develop partnerships in research and involvement in projects that will benefit students through internships, research projects, and other activities.

We are looking at other kinds of programming as well. GGWC is in the process of developing a learning community of graduate students interested in developing skills that will enhance the graduate experience at CSU and, upon graduation, enrich the skills they take into their career in the academy and elsewhere. This particular project is in the early planning stages. Students who come to the center will be invited to form a personal network of peers across the disciplines and within their own areas of interest and research. The Center will continue to reinforce and develop their skills in grant-seeking and grant-writing through training and information sessions. The learning communities will participate in financial literacy and competency seminars, and will be encouraged to avail themselves of the international education experiences through CSU's Center for International Services and Programs.

Articles

GGWC also hopes to expand its relationship with the university's Career Services center so that students will have the option to learn about career options and planning. Moreover, the Center plans to seek a much closer relationship with faculty in graduate programs so that GGWC and faculty members can help students to develop stronger skills in and experience with research writing and project design, thus presenting a united and seamless effort of support. Finally, to enhance civic and social involvements with the community, the Center will encourage leadership and volunteerism in the students who join its programs. This final goal will be achieved through strengthening on-campus partnerships and developing new on- and off-campus partnerships.

One further area in which the GGWC will partner with campus programs and with a group of students who are seeking funds through the Center concerns language skills. This is a necessary service that the Center, in partnership with the students and faculty, can offer to its international graduate students. In academic year 2010-11, CSU hosted 1,000 graduate and undergraduate students from various nations. We have learned from many students that their greatest need is learning to write in English and learning the rules for writing papers, research plans, and grant proposals. Working with our campus partners, The Writing Center and the Center for International Services and programs, GGWC will offer peer-to-peer mentoring sessions. These sessions will consist of conversations and practice exercises to help our international students to develop skills and acquire the tools to become proficient in written English.

Taking the Measure

Over the one and one-half semesters of its existence, the Graduate Grant Writing Center has experienced some success. Among a student population largely unaware of the external resources available to them for funding education and research, the Center has been able to create an interest in pursuing outside funding. More importantly, about one-third of the students who have attended workshops and advising sessions have written proposals to outside sources. Other students have taken the Center's advice and requested that their advisors write them into grants to agencies such as National Science Foundation, National Institutes of Health, and National Aeronautical and Space Administration. The Center requests that students using its services keep staff apprised of any applications that they submit for funding. However, this is not a rule. The GGWC realizes that students who have taken our workshops are free to submit applications on their own or with their advisors, and the Center would be none the wiser. There could be more activity than we know.

The Graduate Grant Center has three faculty mentors who are working with students in their disciplines to develop funding proposals for research, doctoral dissertation expenses, and educational fellowships. Twenty-three students have applied to federal and private agencies seeking research support, fellowships, scholarships from professional associations, and internships. USAID, NASA, Sundance Institute, AERA, Fidler Foundation, IBM, Aspen Institute, and the University of London are a few of the entities to which our students are applying. From Clinical Chemistry to Electrical Engineering, from Teacher

Education through Urban Planning and Public Management, from Social Work through Biological Anthropology to Physical Therapy through Marketing, our students are applying for funding to enhance their educational experience, conduct research, and broaden their skill sets and knowledge within their disciplines.

The university and the GGWC staff are committed to making the center a success. More importantly, the effort is dedicated toward the future. Because of diminishing federal resources, changes in US higher education, and preferences for advanced degrees in the marketplace, CSU realizes that preparing graduate students to take their places in the 21st century academy or corporation must include providing them with marketable skills beyond those acquired in the discipline. Our work lies ahead of us.

References

- Andrews, K., & Edwards, B. (2004). Advocacy organizations in the US political process. *Annual Review of Sociology*, 30, 479-506.
- Becker, G.S. (1964). *Human capital*. New York, NY: Columbia University Press.
- Becker, G. S. (1993). *Human capital: A theoretical and empirical analysis with special reference to education* (3rd ed.). Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.
- Bourdieu, P. (1986). *The forms of capital: Handbook of theory and research for the sociology of education*. New York, NY: Greenwood Press.
- Burt, R. (1992). *Structural holes: The social structure of competition*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Chaskin, R.J., Brown, P, Venkatesh, S., and Vidal, A. (2001) *Building community capacity*. New York, NY: Aldine de Gruyter.
- Chrislip, D.D., & Larson C.E. (1994). *Collaborative leadership: How citizens and civic leaders make a difference*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.
- Coleman, J. S. (1988). Social capital in the creation of human capital. *American Journal of Sociology*, 94, S95-S120.
- Coleman, J. S. 1990. *Foundations of social theory*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.
- Council of Graduate Schools. (2011). CGS international graduate admissions survey, phase III: Final offers of admission and enrollment.

Articles

- CSU tuition and fees. Retrieved from http://www.csuohio.edu/offices/treasuryservices/tuition/www.cleveland.com/datacentral/index.ssf/2010/09/clevelands_poverty_is_second_a.html
- Darroch, J. (2005). Knowledge management, innovation and firm performance. *Journal of Knowledge Management*, 9(3), 101-115.
- Delgado-Verde, M., Martín-de Castro, G., & Navas-López, J. (2011). Organizational knowledge assets and innovation capability: evidence from Spanish manufacturing firms. *Journal of Intellectual Capital*, 12(1), 5-19.
- DiMaggio, P., & Mohr, J. (1985). Cultural capital, educational attainment, and marital selection. *American Journal of Sociology*, 90(6), 1231-1261.
- Edvinsson, L., & Malone, M. (1997). *Intellectual capital: Realizing your company's True value by finding its hidden brainpower*. New York, NY: HarperCollins.
- Exner, R. (2010). Cleveland's poverty is second among big cities: Gap between rich and poor grows nationally. Retrieved from http://www.cleveland.com/datacentral/index.ssf/2010/09/clevelands_poverty_is_second_a.html
- Florin, J., Lubatkin, M., & Schulze, W. (2003). A social capital model of high growth ventures. *Academy of Management Journal*, 46(3), 374-384.
- Frese, M., Krauss, S.I., Keith, N., Escher, S., Grabarkiewicz, R., Luneng, S.T., . . . Friedrich, C. (2007). Business owners' action planning and its relationship to business success in three African countries. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 92(6), 1481-1498.
- Gostick, A., & Elton, C. (2010). *The orange revolution: How one great team can transform an entire organization*. New York, NY: Simon & Schuster.
- Halpern, D. (2005). *Social capital*. Malden, MA: Polity Press.
- Herman, R.D., & Renz, D.O. (1999). Theses on nonprofit organizational effectiveness. *Nonprofit and Voluntary Sector Quarterly*, 28(2), 107-126.
- James, E.H. (2000). Race-related differences in promotions and support: Underlying effects of human and social capital. *Organization Science*, 11, 493-508.
- Jennings, J., & Torres, R. (2007). Community-based nonprofits in US inner cities: Collaborative strategies for community building. *SAGE Race Relations Abstracts*, 32(4).

- Kilbride, K.M. (2000). A review of the literature on the human, social and cultural capital of immigrant children and their families with implications for teacher education. Retrieved from <http://www.ceris.metropolis.net/Virtual%20Library/education/Kilbride2/kilbride2.html>
- Kretzman, J. & McKnight, J. (1993). *Building communities from inside out: A path toward funding and mobilizing a community's assets*. Chicago, IL: ACTA Publications.
- Lamont, M., & Lareau, A. (1988). Cultural capital: Allusions, gaps and glissandos in recent theoretical developments. *Sociological Theory*, 6, 153-168.
- Lin, N. (2001). *Social capital: A theory of social structure and action*. New York, NY: Cambridge University Press.
- Ng, T.W.H., Eby, L.T., Sorensen, K.L., & Feldman, D.C. (2005). Predictors of objective and subjective career success: A meta-analysis. *Personnel Psychology*, 58(2), 367-408.
- Putnam, R. D. (2000). *Bowling alone: The collapse and revival of American community*. New York, NY: Simon & Schuster.
- Ryan, W. (2001) Nonprofit capital: A review of problems and strategies. Rockefeller Foundation and Fannie Mae Foundation. Retrieved from http://www.community-wealth.org/_pdfs/articles-publications/pris/paper-ryan.pdf
- Sagas, M., & Cunningham, G.B. (2004). Does having "the right stuff" matter? Gender differences in the determinants of career success among intercollegiate athletic administrators. *Sex Roles*, 50(5-6), 411-421.
- Sanchez, P., Chaminade, C., & Olea, M. (2000). Management of intangibles: an attempt to build theory. *Journal of Intellectual Capital*, 1(4), 312-327.
- Schneider, J. (2009). Organizational social capital and nonprofits. *Nonprofit and Voluntary Sector Quarterly* 38(4), 643-662.
- Stone, M.M., & Cutcher-Gershenfeld, S. (2002). Challenges of measuring performance in nonprofit organizations. In P. Flynn & V.A. Hodgkinson (Eds.), *Measuring the impact of the nonprofit sector*. New York, NY: Kluwer Academic/Plenum.
- Subramaniam, M., & Youndt, M. (2005). The influence of intellectual capital on the types of innovative capabilities. *Academy of Management Journal*, 48(33), 450-463.
- Sullivan, A., & Sheffrin, S. (2003). *Economics: Principles in action*. Upper Saddle River, NY: Pearson Prentice Hall.

Articles

- Torpe, L. (2003). Democracy and associations in Denmark: Changing relationships between individuals and associations? *Nonprofit and Voluntary Sector Quarterly*, 32(3), 329-343.
- Walker, G., Golde, C., Jones, L., Conklin Bueschel, A., & Hutchings, P. (2007). *The formation of scholars: Rethinking doctoral education for the twenty-first century*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.
- Weinberg, A. (1999). The university and the hamlets: Revitalizing low-income communities through university outreach and community visioning exercises. *American Behavioral Scientist*, 42(5), 800-813.
- Weisblat, G. *Asset-based paradigm for organizational innovation and effectiveness in the non-profit community*. Kresge Foundation Working Paper, accepted September 2011.
- Wendler, C., Bridgeman, B., Cline, F., Millett, C., Rock, J., Bell, N., & McAllister, P. (2010). *The path forward: The future of graduate education in the United States*. Commission on the Future of Graduate Education. Retrieved from <http://www.fgereport.org>

Through The Lens of the Students: Using Narrative Inquiry to Evaluate an Innovative Urban High School

Gina Weisblat²⁸

*Northeast Ohio Medical University,
Rootstown, OH*

Jeffrey McClellan²⁹

*Cleveland Metropolitan
School District*

ABSTRACT

MC Squared STEM High School is part of the Cleveland Metropolitan School District. It has a project-based curriculum that focuses on the core stem skills: science, technology, engineering, and math. As the school celebrated its first graduating class in 2012, administrators felt it was the right time to look back and evaluate the school's progress. This urban school district is Ohio's second largest. This paper explores the process that took place during the evaluation process. It is as much a search for the right questions to ask as for the right answers. It is also an exploration of the working relationship between researcher and practitioner, which is an important part of narrative inquiry methodology.

Keywords: Project-based STEM curricula, Urban high school reform, Assessment

Background

MC² STEM has approximately 41,000 students are 70% Black, 15% Caucasian, 11% Hispanic, and 3% other. 83% of the student body is at poverty level and 100% are eligible for the federal universal meals program. The district serves 2,000 homeless students. A mobility rate of 38.2% of students transferring in or out of school in the course of a year creates instability and discontinuity. MC² STEM prepares high school students for 21st century workforce demands by exposing them to the design challenges and practices that are modeled after today's STEM industries. Students build the critical thinking and problem-solving skills necessary to effect change as they grapple with essential questions, address real problems, formulate ideas, and defend perspectives alongside their instructors, peers, and field experts.

²⁸ **Gina Weisblat** is the Director of Education for Service and Assistant Professor of Family and Community Medicine at Northeast Ohio Medical University in Rootstown, Ohio. Dr. Weisblat can be reached at NEOMED, 429nState Route 44, P.O. Box 95, Rootstown, Ohio 44272 or GWeisblat@neomed.edu

²⁹ **Jeffrey D. McClellan** is the head of MC², a stem school in Cleveland, Ohio. He recently completed his doctorate in education and continues to be an innovator in the field of stem education. Dr. McClellan can be reached at 216.574.8000 or jeffrey.d.mcclellan@cmsdnet.net.

Students are embedded in three different regional STEM campuses. The ninth graders are hosted at the Great Lakes Science Center, where they work with both the Great Lakes Science Center and NASA Glenn Research Center. Here they experience job shadowing, internships, and hands-on work with NASA engineers. The tenth grade students attend school at GE Lighting's Nela Park Campus and work with GE Lighting employees of all professions. The focus in the first two years is a rigorous integrated curriculum in which students participate in multiple field experiences on the STEM industry campuses through hands-on learning and exploration. In 11th and 12th grade, students move to the next level of purposeful learning through internships, specially designed capstones and the Post-Secondary Educational Options Program (college classes).

MC Squared has been the subject of multiple local and national evaluations in its first four years. Three of these surveys are of critical importance: 1) the Youth Truth Survey completed in February 2011, 2) the 2010 and 2011 Conditions for Learning Survey, and 3) The Center for Elementary Mathematics and Science Education at the University of Chicago evaluation done in conjunction with the Battelle Center for Elementary Mathematics and Science Education Ohio Stem Learning Network (OSLN) Evaluation.

This paper uses narrative inquiry methodology to explore the evaluation process itself, examining how researcher and practitioner (here the principal of MC² STEM) must work together to provide a candid assessment of the school's progress. The sources for this paper are notes taken by both the researcher and the principal during the course of the evaluation. These notes reflect how watching the students from afar (case studies), and having the opportunity to "dance with them on the floor" (participatory research action) provided an opportunity to deeply understand the system and allow for organically driven answers to the research. This process allowed the researcher to go back and understand the data from the perspective of non-academic factors that motivate academic success within the context of the school, and to document the creative use of limited existing resources to build a new kind of education.

Urban education is complex. Research in the field is broad and explanations of the events that lead to each outcome are many. Understanding a successful urban school is akin to completing a jigsaw puzzle. At first glance, the puzzle pieces make little sense. However, by deconstructing that puzzle, we can understand how the pieces come together, and in so doing evaluate the experience with data-driven outcomes. Finding the correct research question is every bit as hard as doing the research. When we embarked on this evaluation, we had only a broad question with which to explore: What enabled MC Squared students to succeed when contextual peer school students did not? We wanted to answer this question from the perspective of the urban students whose lives had been transformed over their four years at the school.

Narrative Inquiry

Narrative inquiry is a form of research that serves to understand a phenomenon or an experience through the analysis of one's story (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000). Narrative inquiry is both the process and the product. Clandinin and Connelly (2000) define the field as, "... a way of understanding experience. It is collaboration between researcher and participants, over time, in a place or series of places, and in social interaction with milieus" (p. 20). This model is influenced and informed by the investigation and writing of scholars who have authenticated it through multiple disciplines and contexts (Bruner, 1996; Connelly & Clandinin, 1990; 1994; 2000; Grumet, 1991; Witherell & Noddings, 1991). In the methodology of narrative inquiry the stories, called field texts (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000), constitute the data. Researchers can analyze this data after they recast their stories based on narrative elements such as the problem, characters, setting, actions, and resolution (Ollerenshaw & Creswell, 2000).

The narrative inquirer emphasizes the importance of learning from participants in a setting. Clandinin and Connelly (2000) use these stories to report personal experiences (what the individual feels) as well as socially connected practices (the individual's recounting of interactions with others). "Narrative and life go together and so the principal attraction of narrative as method is its capacity to render life experiences, both personal and social, in relevant and meaningful ways" (Connelly & Clandinin, 1990, p. 10).

This paper will be shaped through interpretations of the narratives. The raw data used to formulate these narratives draw on transcribed interviews the researcher conducted with six recent MC² STEM graduates. In addition, the researcher spent a year getting to know the senior class by teaching a capstone (senior project) class at the school. The values, beliefs and experiences the students described will help the research team excavate complex patterns and understand how these patterns impact a person's experience from specific social and cultural standpoints. Data gained in this way will reflect the multiple voices, perspectives, and meanings experienced by the researcher and practitioner. Lastly, as Clandinin and Connelly (2000) suggest, the story may also reflect insights the researcher gained into him or herself in the process.

The reflections and thoughts of both the researcher and practitioner (principal of MC² STEM) are a critical component of this inquiry. The practitioner's voice in the research has traditionally been silenced (Connelly & Clandinin, 1990). Both the principal and the researcher noted their experiences as they undertook the evaluation together, documenting each milestone of learning and frustration with notes to themselves on the experience. After the evaluation was completed, they shared these reflections and explored together their professional and personal growth through the process.

For this evaluation, the question of success was examined through the lens

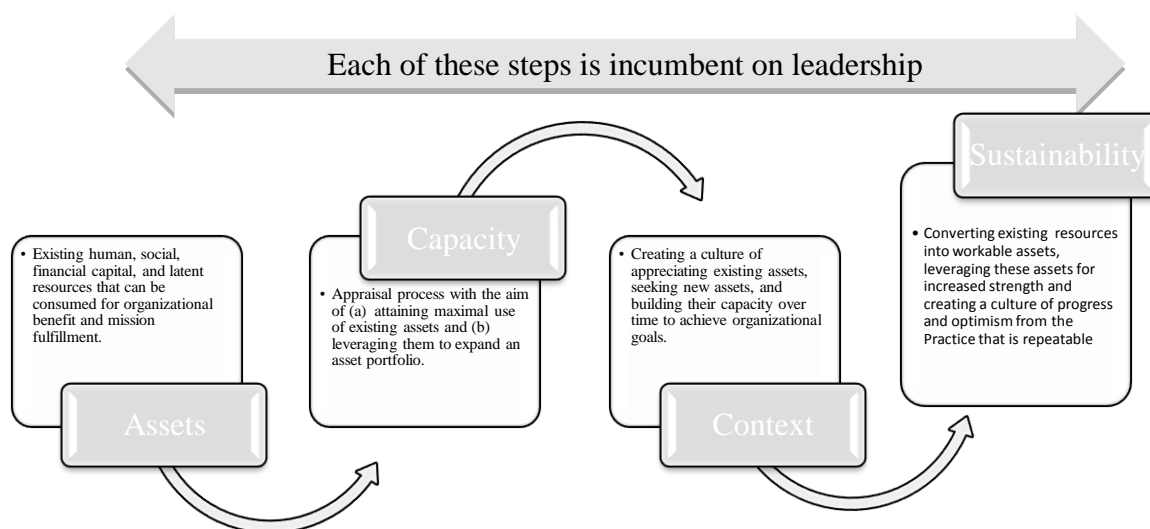
of the student. The study was designed to cultivate their point of view through a broad survey of the senior class (with some open ended questions), followed by group and individual interviews based on the findings of the initial survey. We used the established research as a basis for those group and individual questions and then analyzed this data in conjunction with existing artifact data (school reports, student work, completion rates, internship, etc.).

Asset-Based Paradigm

The conceptual basis for this analysis is the asset-based paradigm (Weisblat & Sell, 2012). Under this construct, assets in an organization are akin to the genetic traits of an individual. These genes, if properly activated, help individuals achieve their potential and maximize their efficiency. Often institutions and organizations have tremendous assets that are unrealized and underutilized (Weinberg, 1999; Zula & Chermack, 2007). While much time is spent on capacity building and creating opportunities for new development based upon this process, much less effort is expended on leveraging assets to achieve needed ends. The process of considering how existing non-economic assets can be combined within and across resource systems is thus frequently ignored. Figure 1 illustrates how the assets of an organization, its capacity for self-appraisal, and the context of creating the proper organizational culture, can lead to a sustainable organization, where existing resources are converted into workable assets.

Figure 1

*Asset Development for Organizational Effectiveness*³⁰



³⁰ Weisblat et al, 2012

How People Learn

In the traditional model of education, “teaching is telling, knowledge is facts, and learning is recall” (Cohen, 1989). We know now that learning is about understanding information within a general framework and being able to relate and apply general concepts to specific experiences across contexts. *How people learn* (Bransford, Brown, & Cocking, 2000) places active learning in the service of metacognition rather than just the mastery of immediate skills. Any assessment or learning measurement must in some sense be behavioral as well. Bransford et al.’s (2000) award winning National Science Foundation definition of learning includes three main tenets: 1) understanding and accepting the learners’ position and space within their community and how this relates to the generation of new knowledge, 2) incorporating existing knowledge and leveraging this information into new scholarship, and 3) embedding on-going metacognition into all facets of the learning cycle (Bransford et al., 2000). The *How People Learn* framework supports academic achievement for all types of learners, and utilizes the asset-based paradigm to further develop learning opportunities and advancement, recognizing the strengths and skills of the learner in the process (Bransford et al., 2000).

Researcher: I am teaching high school kids about graduate level concepts,’ I told a colleague yesterday. I got that all-knowing look in exchange, something along the lines of ‘Sure you are’. I guess I would have the same response. I am learning that some experience in the context is necessary to truly understand the process. The students today described their social capital as those who had their back, their cultural capital as their ability to understand where it is safe to walk and knowing what dialect to use, their human capital as their ability to take nothing and make something. Helping them discover how to apply their existing knowledge to the theoretical constructs is truly exhilarating and in some ways just mind-boggling.

MC Squared embraces its foundational mission of high academic achievement, while pursuing the development of Wagner’s 21st century skills; these skills are non-academic psycho-social factors for success, as identified in the leading-edge work of Robins et al. (2004) and Lee et al. (1995). From Robins and Lee’s seminal work, McClellan (2012) proposed a multi-faceted conceptual model that provides a deeper, more complex understanding of how non-academic determinants help to support and sustain student academic success. This is accomplished by positively altering pre-existing peer, family and community relationships.

The research team proposed that the composite of psychosocial and academic-related skill predictors (including Wagner’s (2008) work) were best understood by three higher order constructs: motivation, self-management, and social engagement. This model, coupled with a secondary model of the asset-

based paradigm (Weisblat, 2011), serves as the context in which the school and its processes were evaluated.

There has been much conversation about “twenty-first century” skills. Wagner (2008) suggests that students (even in “the best schools”) are not being prepared for leadership in the future. Wagner defines seven survival skills that all students need:

1. Critical thinking and problem solving
2. Collaboration across networks and leading by influencing
3. Agility and adaptability
4. Initiative and entrepreneurialism
5. Effective oral and written communication
6. Accessing and analyzing information
7. Curiosity and imagination

Non-Academic Factors

One of the concerns was determining what factors contributed to the students’ positive learning experiences. The literature sets forth critical components that help students reach their academic potential within their learning community. In a seminal study by Robbins, Lauver, Le, Davis, & Langley (2004), researchers examined 109 prospective studies in which various psychosocial and study skill factors were used to predict academic achievement (the processing schema necessary to accept new concepts and transfer those new concepts from one situation to another). Four main non-academic influences have been proposed as critical to academic achievement: motivation, social engagement, self-management (Robbins et al., 2004) and community engagement (Kretzmann & McKnight, 1993). In a healthy eco-system there are many points of connection that help to keep it dynamic. These points include a school’s or an organization’s internal and external operating systems, and the coordination between these two systems as critical to the overall ecosystem

This synergistic system derives from the roles of individuals (i.e. teachers, students, parents, business partners, etc.) and the ways they interact within the school (internally) and also with the community (externally). Individually and collectively this eco-system thrives by building on its existing assets to maximize its capacity. When the schools and organizations recognize their intrinsic value along with the value in their connections to others, their ability to develop a diverse set of strategies to achieve their goals is maximized. In other words, knowing what you have, how to work it, and when to blend it in context with the mission is the stimulus necessary for achieving success. The entropic nature of this eco-system and the connections between each of these points create a rich atmosphere fertile for student success.

Researcher: Today, the students made me laugh so hard! I could barely settle them to begin work on budget analysis for implementing their projects. So I left off where we were, and I took them to their prom in

their imagination to learn how to operationalize a budget. As they described all the items that they would need to prepare, go to prom and celebrate after, I began to understand their thinking had become a natural continuum. Their education allowed them to apply their knowledge through the very practical vehicle of real life. The exercise also spoke to their need to build off each other and to use this energy and synergy to create new ideas. As they chided one another for silly comments, flow was in the room. Students moved with ease, self-corrected, immediately adapted to new ideas and offered new solutions. All the while, I thought: if someone from the outside world came into this room, what they may see was so very different from what I and the young people were learning and experiencing.

The current model of schooling does not match the context of the work world of the 21st century. Schools need to realign their set-up to motivate every student by presenting opportunities to grow within today's environment.

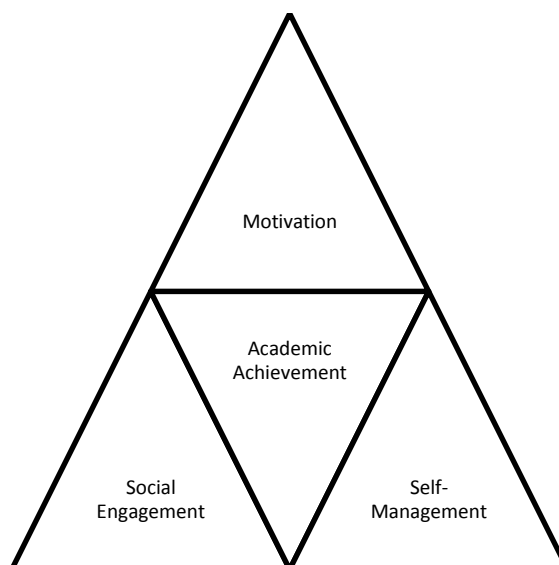
Student Success Triangle

Principal: We made a breakthrough today when we were talking about the way the school leverages its outside resources and we connected this (and the triangle) to [the researcher's] Asset based paradigm.

McClellan's white paper on the Theory of Student Success Triangle (2012) notes that in the world of science and engineering an equilateral triangle is the strongest two-dimensional geometric shape. The equilateral triangle has the ability to withstand immense load force without deformation. If a load is applied to any vertex or side, it is evenly distributed by all sides and, because the sides cannot change length, the shape remains stable. When the same is applied to another shape, the forces are applied to the connectors and can make the sides pivot, collapsing the shape. (<http://www.reference.com/motif/Science/why-is-the-triangle-the-strongest-shape>)

Similarly, maximizing and sustaining student achievement is dependent upon supporting student development within three critical components that are connected to one another. McClellan recalibrates these components of non-academic success (Self-Management, Motivation, and Social Engagement) to show that when present in full capacity and connected to each other systematically, they form the boundaries necessary for maximized sustained academic achievement. His work indicates that the values associated with academic potential need to be aligned and measured in a tri-faceted manner. His contribution is that students engaged within an ecosystem such as the one at MC Squared are able to withstand immense force (life and learning challenges) without reducing their potential for academic success.

Figure 2:
Student Success Triangle ³¹



Principal: I really look forward to our conversations. We always begin with a specific list of deliverables to get done `during our conversations and we never seem to get our deliverables completed but the dialogue is very good. We talk about the school and spend time connecting what is happening at the school with the research that we have read. I will share how I perceive a situation and she [researcher] will connect it to some research or theory and then explain the theory to me. It is really incredible because there are things that I know and feel but haven't necessarily been able to articulate them. She usually knows some research or theory to connect with what I am describing. Our conversations are classic examples of Heifetz's ideas about the leader being able to be on the dance floor and on the balcony. After we talk, I find myself thinking about the researcher when I am dealing with real situations. It helps me to have frameworks from which to apply action. I have started to bring separate lists to these meetings just to get her opinion as a researcher on certain situations.

Document and artifact review

The students' narratives were not the only source of data for the assessment. The research team also examined documents and artifacts in the form of school records and experiences. As a supplement to surveys and individual and group interviews, this form of data collection provided a different perspective on the case being studied (Marshall & Rossman, 2006). Two types of artifacts were

³¹ McClellan (2012) Theory of Student Success Triangle

analyzed for this study: artifacts from the six identified students, and third party reports completed and presented to the school.

In order to gain a deeper understanding of each of the six students studied, a thorough review of available records was completed. The following documents (as available) were reviewed for each of the six participants:

- Application and information from initial interview for school entrance
- Report cards (any written communication)
- PSEOP credits
- Internship experiences
- Career aspirations
- Family size and history (if available)
- Background of school experience prior to entering MC Squared

Researcher: However, while the data and method defined the structure of the evaluation process, it was the marriage of the data interpretation with the principal's framework and the researcher's parallel experience in the school that allowed for a new depth of data analysis.

Findings

The principal and researcher uncovered three main themes in the course of their evaluation: 1) context, play and space matter in creating, understanding and defining events; 2) allowing an entropic process of learning to occur without trying to define it or limit it at the time of the events provides opportunity to later deliver a rich linear explanation of context and experience; 3) grit, trust and uneasiness are critical elements allowing colleagues to work together and achieve a higher level of understanding.

Principal: I am finding myself looking at what I see at the school and outside the school from a different point of view. I can't go back now. I have come to understand the work I do within the framework of myself, the school, my community and now in the way of an academic. The research project is complete, the report is done; but now I realize it will never be done.

Researcher: Questions lead to more questions ~ staying focused and learning how to unravel this project from the inside out and from the outside in while being a part of the school has changed my life. Understanding context, and being able to explore it in an organized pathway, came from letting the process lead. I thought I got it before starting this research, but I did not really understand how little I knew until we finished the report.

Researcher and practitioner set out on this examination to understand the role of non-academic factors in a school and its students' success. What evolved through

the experience was a deeper understanding of the process of this evaluation. The researcher and practitioner gained a greater appreciation of each other's perspective, which in turn enhanced the process. The researcher garnered a new perspective on the students and the practitioner was tutored in the research method. These lessons enhanced the research in ways not otherwise attainable.

Conclusion

Principal: We meet today to talk about the findings of the surveys. The researcher spent a year teaching a course during the evaluation process to a different group of seniors, learning their stories, their strengths and weaknesses, and the manner in which their journeys evolved. Having this parallel experience provided an ongoing filter to take the outcomes learned from the data in the study and think about them in a very lively and interactive manner.

Researcher: As a researcher, the themes that emerged from teaching a capstone class, and interpretation of the data from the actual evaluation, allowed me to digest it all in a completely new manner: the marriage of participatory action research and case study. The principal's insights from his world were invaluable to truly understanding my data and my own experiences in the school. This space we created for open conversation helped advance my understanding and commitment to the process.

A traditional research method would likely yield a good understanding of non-academic factors and their role in the success of MC² STEM and its students. However, the opportunity for regular discourse between researcher and practitioner provided a much deeper interdisciplinary understanding of these factors. This understanding provides a new lens through which to view other social constructs.

It should be noted that the success of the school rests on the success of the students. It is they who reap the benefit of the asset-based paradigm. The evaluation process highlighted several components to the success of MC² STEM and its students. Follow up evaluation has begun with the same questions, now examining the first cohort's year one year post graduation and a new cohort. The adaptability and flexibility of the school's learning model allowed incorporation of existing knowledge, included experiences outside of the normal classroom, and encouraged thinking "outside of the box," all coming together to create something that was greater than the sum of its parts.

References

- Bransford, J. D., Brown, A. L., & Cocking, R. R. (Eds.). (2000). *How People Learn*. Washington, DC: National Academy Press.
- Bruner, J. (1996). *The culture of education*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Connelly, F. M., & Clandinin, D. J. (1990). Stories of experience and narrative

- inquiry. *Educational Researcher* 19(4), 2-15.
 - Connelly, F. M., & Clandinin, D. J. (1994). Personal experience methods. In N. K. Denzin and Y. S. Lincoln (Eds.), *Handbook of qualitative research* (pp. 413-427). Newbury Park, CA: Sage Publications.
 - Clandinin, D.J. & Connelly, F.M, (2000) *Narrative Inquiry*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass
 - Grumet, M. (1991). The politics of personal knowledge. In C. Witherell & N. Noddings (Eds.), *Stories lives tell: Narrative and dialogue in education* (pp.67-77). New York: Teachers College Press.
 - Kretzmann, J. P., & McKnight, J. L. (1993). *Building communities from the inside out: A path toward finding and mobilizing a community's assets*. Skokie, IL: ACTA Publications.
 - Marshall, C., & Rossman, G. (2006). *Doing qualitative research (4th ed.)*. London: Sage.
 - Robbins, S.B., Lauver, K., Le, H., Davis, D. & Langley. R. (2004). Do psycho-social and study skill factors predict college outcomes? A meta-analysis. *Psychological Bulletin*, 130(2), 261-288.
 - Wagner, T. (2008). *The global achievement gap: Why even our best schools don't teach the new survival skills our children need--and what we can do about it*. New York, NY: Basic Books
 - Weinberg, A. S. (1999). The university and the hamlets: Revitalizing low-income communities through university outreach and community visioning exercises. *American Behavioral Scientist*, 42(5), 800-813.
 - Weisblat, G. (September, 2011). *Asset-Based Paradigm for Organizational Innovation and Effectiveness in the Non-Profit Community*. Unpublished paper presented at the Kresge Scholars Conference, November, 2011
 - Weisblat, G., & Sell, C. (2012), Starting Early: Teaching graduate students transferable skills beyond the discipline. *Journal of Research Administration*, 43(1), pp. 60-84.
 - Witherell, C., & Noddings, N. (Eds.). (1991). *Stories lives tell: Narrative and dialogue in education*. New York: Teachers College Press.
 - Zula, K. J., & Chermack. T. J. (2007). Human capital planning: A review of literature and implications for human resource development. *Human Resource Development Review*, 6(3), 245-262.
-

Separation Agreement and Mutual Release

This Separation Agreement and Mutual Release ("the Agreement") is made by and between Northeast Ohio Medical University on behalf of itself and its directors, officers, employees and agents, and each of them, jointly and severally (herein "NEOMED") of 4209 State Route 44, Rootstown, Ohio 44272, and Gina Weisblat, Ph.D., on behalf of herself and her heirs, executors, guardians, administrators, successors, assigns, and legal representatives and each of them jointly and severally (herein "Weisblat") of 2358 Ardleigh Road, Cleveland Heights, Ohio 44106, (herein collectively "the Parties") who agree to be bound by the terms and conditions hereof, entered into as of March 1, 2018 (the "Effective Date").

WITNESSETH:

WHEREAS, the Parties desire to fully, equitably, and completely dispose of any and all differences between them including any and all claims of whatever kind or nature which the Parties ever had or may now have with respect to any aspect to Weisblat's employment with NEOMED, or with respect to any other matter, based on any acts that have occurred from the beginning of time to the effective date of this Agreement.

NOW THEREFORE, for and in consideration of the mutual promises hereinafter contained and intending to be legally bound hereby, the Parties hereto do hereby represent, warrant, covenant and agree as follows:

1. The Parties, each on behalf of themselves and on behalf of their respective heirs, legal representatives, officers, directors, employees, agents, successors and assigns, release each other from all actions, causes of action, claims, demands, damages (including compensatory, exemplary, statutory, and punitive damages), attorney fees, costs, and matters of any kind, in law, equity, or otherwise, that any of them individually or in any representative capacity has or has ever had against the others because of or arising out of any events arising out of Weisblat's employment and any events related thereto occurring on or before the date of this Agreement. This release applies, without limitation, with respect to any events, actions or claims undergirding or arising out of the matters alleged in Weisblat's Complaint filed with NEOMED on September 24, 2017, except Workers' Compensation.
2. The Parties, each on behalf of themselves and on behalf of their respective heirs, legal representatives, officers, directors, employees, agents, successors and assigns, promise not to sue or proceed in any manner, in agency or other proceedings, whether at law, in equity, by way of administrative hearing, or otherwise, to solicit others to institute any such actions or proceedings, or consent to be a complainant in any action or proceeding, against the other Party and its respective heirs, legal representatives, officers, directors, employees, agents, successors and assigns, because of or arising out of the events described in Section 1 and any events related thereto occurring on or before the date of this Agreement, except as required by law.
3. This Agreement may be pleaded as a full and complete defense to and may be used as the basis for an injunction against, any action, suit or other proceeding which may be instituted, prosecuted or attempted in breach of this Agreement. Further, each of the Parties will indemnify and hold each other harmless against all losses, damages, costs, and expenses, including reasonable attorney fees, resulting from the breach of any promise, provision, representation, or

covenant contained in this Agreement for all acts occurring prior to the Effective Date of this Agreement.

4. This Agreement shall not in any way be construed as an admission by either of the Parties.
5. The Parties represent that they have not heretofore assigned or transferred or purported to assign or transfer to any person or entity, any Claim or any portion thereof or interest therein.
6. In consideration of this Agreement, effective March 1, 2018:
 - a. Weisblat will remain on the NEOMED monthly payroll at her current annual salary (\$84,300.00) for a period of fifteen (15) months through May 31, 2019, even if she becomes employed elsewhere. She will continue to receive her group insurance benefits until she is eligible for benefits elsewhere or May 31, 2019 whichever comes first. If Weisblat secures group insurance coverage elsewhere, she will be eligible to receive \$590.00/month for each month between the time she provides NEOMED with evidence of coverage and May 31, 2019 in lieu of receiving group insurance benefits. Weisblat will receive her regular monthly pay less all applicable deductions and withholdings; accrue vacation and sick time and receive on May 31, 2019, a one-time lump sum payout equivalent to five (5) months' salary (\$35,125.00). NEOMED will pay Weisblat for all accrued but unused vacation time at the end of the term of this Agreement and will maintain unused sick time in accordance with NEOMED policy.
 - b. It is also understood that Weisblat will:
 - i. retain her current phone number and email address through May 31, 2019 (unless she directs NEOMED otherwise, i.e., she accepts a position at another institution/employer and no longer desires any NEOMED employment affiliation)
 - ii. remain on the tenure track through June 30, 2018 and will retain her faculty title of Assistant Professor Family & Community Medicine and Director of Education for Service. Effective July 1, 2018, Weisblat will retain the same foregoing title, but will assume a faculty position in the non-tenure track through May 31, 2019 or until she is employed elsewhere, whichever comes first;
 - iii. be permitted to apply for any non-tenure track faculty appointment at NEOMED that would begin after her Faculty Leadership Advancement Leave concludes;
 - iv. retain or become, upon the approval of the respective granting authority, the Principal Investigator ("PI")/Director of the following grants, with all the attendant rights and responsibilities of PI/Director, including employee/volunteer supervision and fiscal accountability:
 - Academic Success and Cleveland Health Professionals Pipeline grant, NEOMED Index #G0076, that expires 6/30/18;
 - The Health Careers Opportunity Program, also referred to as the HCOP or HRSA grant, NEOMED Index #G0033, that expires 8/31/18 (this NEOMED Index includes the Supplemental grant and Carryover);
 - Primary Care Workforce Pipeline and Community Based-Training Program, NEOMED Index #31142, that expires 2/28/18;

- Corps for Rural and Urban Success and Health, NEOMED Index #G0159 and all associated cost-share indices, that expires 7/31/18 (no further matching funds will be provided by NEOMED beyond this date);
 - 21st Century Community Learning Center, NEOMED Index #G0155, that expires 6/30/18;
 - Ohio Means Internships and Co-Ops RAPIDS, NEOMED Index #G0184, that expires 6/30/18;
 - RAPIDS 2 Robotics, expires 12/31/18;
 - Community Connector 360 Mentoring, NEOMED Index #G0160 Wright State Community Connector Subaward, NEOMED Index #G0195, both of which expire 6/30/18; and
 - HealthCare Workforce in Southeast Ohio, NEOMED Index #G0171, that expires 7/31/18.
- v. be permitted to request extensions of the foregoing grants to complete the current grant obligations (subject to the sponsor approval). Weisblat needs to plan for all work in the foregoing grants (i.e., programming, data analysis and report generation) to be completed by 12/31/18 unless she transfers any unexpired grants to another qualified institution prior to that date. Disposition of any equipment procured by NEOMED utilizing grant funds will be subject to the sponsor's discretion.
- vi. be permitted to reasonably and promptly transfer any unexpired grants to another qualified institution under the terms and conditions specified by the sponsor; the transfer of any grant or Carryover funds must be performed in accordance with grants accounting practices and accurately reflect time, effort and expenses incurred up to the date of transfer.
- vii. cooperate with NEOMED and/or the sponsor relative to any reporting or communication requirements that may arise during and after the grant transition process. NEOMED will cooperate with Weisblat and/or the sponsor relative to any reporting or communication requirements owed to the sponsor at all times.
- viii. retain her direct reports (as mutually agreed upon) and assume responsibility for all programmatic activities and fiscal management for the foregoing grants while they are active (including the Purchasing Card expenditures of her direct and indirect reports on the grants); expenses that are not allowable under any of the foregoing grants will not be financially backstopped by the College of Medicine.
- ix. be immediately reassigned to report directly to Rebecca Hayes, Executive Director of Research and Sponsored Programs until the first of the following events occurs: the foregoing grants have all expired; Weisblat goes on Faculty Leadership Advancement Leave from NEOMED on January 1, 2019; or Weisblat is employed by another institution/employer.
- x. fulfill any currently scheduled teaching obligations through June 30, 2018, unless she is sooner employed elsewhere. Weisblat will not be assigned any teaching obligations after July 1, 2018.
- xi. remain, for the purpose of tenure, within the Department of Family and Community Medicine. Weisblat will waive any coaching from her Department Chair as well as

- any annual performance review as required by the University Appointment, Promotion and Tenure Bylaws, #3349-03-195, Section E.4.c and E.4.d.
- xii. will submit, upon execution of this Agreement, an irrevocable letter of resignation noting that, effectively immediately, she will resign her tenure-track position on June 30, 2018, and will assume a non-tenure track position effective July 1, 2018 through May 31, 2019, noting that she will begin a Faculty Leadership Advancement Leave no later than January 1, 2019. The Faculty Leadership Advancement Leave will terminate on May 31, 2019.
7. Weisblat will not:
- i. be permitted to renew any of the foregoing grants through NEOMED; Weisblat may apply for a continuation of a grant through NEOMED that would extend beyond December 31, 2018, with the explicit understanding that she must complete all obligations undertaken under the grant by December 31, 2018 unless she transfers the grant to another qualified institution.
 - ii. be permitted to submit any new grants through NEOMED after the Effective Date of this Agreement; nor
 - iii. receive any matching fund support from NEOMED for any of the foregoing grants beyond the above-stated expiration date.
8. Weisblat is encouraged to seek and obtain alternate employment and to transfer her portfolio of grants prior to December 31, 2018. Weisblat may renew or continue any transferred grants through her new employer if that institution so chooses to do so.
9. If the Ohio Board of Nursing ("OBN") permits it, Weisblat may become the Director of the Community Health Worker Program ("CHWP") provided by NEOMED. Upon execution of this Agreement, Boltri will resign his role as the Director and request the OBN allow Weisblat to replace him in this role until December 31, 2018 or until Weisblat obtains employment elsewhere, whichever occurs first. Weisblat may enroll current AmeriCorp Members in the CHWP as part of the AmeriCorp grant, provided Weisblat can fund all programmatic and application fees for participants from existing grant or start-up funds that remain available to her. Weisblat must submit all completed applications to the OBN by December 31, 2018 and comply with all NEOMED reporting requirements. NEOMED will not interfere with or obstruct in any way Weisblat's ability to create a CHWP at a different institution. NEOMED will permit any participant enrolled in the NEOMED CHWP to complete it, irrespective of Weisblat's employment status at NEOMED, so long as the participant completes all the CHWP requirements by December 31, 2018.
10. Weisblat, if not employed elsewhere by June 1, 2018, may support two students for NEOMED summer fellowships using her remaining start-up funds, provided she adhere to the institutional requirements for doing so.
11. No later than January 1, 2019, Weisblat will begin a "Faculty Leadership Advancement Leave." During this period which will begin no later than January 1, 2019 and end no later than May 31,

2019. During her Faculty Leadership Advancement Leave, Weisblat will no longer act as PI or Director on any grant on behalf of NEOMED or supervise any NEOMED employees or volunteers.
12. The Parties represent, covenant and agree that they will not at any time after the Effective Date of this Agreement, through any medium, either orally or in writing, including, but not limited to, electronic mail, television or radio, computer networks or Internet bulletin boards, blogs, social media, such as Facebook, LinkedIn, or Twitter, or any other form of communication, disparage, defame, impugn, damage or assail the reputation, or cause or tend to cause the recipient of a communication to question the business condition, integrity, competence, good character, professionalism, or product quality of either Party, its, directors, officers, employees, services or business practices.
 13. In response to any reference inquiries regarding Weisblat by persons not employed by NEOMED, NEOMED shall only provide Weisblat's beginning and ending dates of employment, and the last position she held with NEOMED, insofar as NEOMED may do so consistently with the requirements of the Ohio Public Records Act and other federal and Ohio law. Weisblat shall direct all individuals making general reference inquiries about her to NEOMED's Human Resources Department at (330) 325-6726, which will offer a letter of recommendation from Elisabeth Young, M.D
 14. NEOMED and Weisblat mutually agree that Elisabeth Young, M.D., Dean of the College of Medicine at NEOMED, will provide a favorable reference for Weisblat as set forth in Exhibit A.
 15. Weisblat shall, on or before December 31, 2018, contact the Human Resources Department of NEOMED and return any and all NEOMED property to the Human Resources Department. Said property includes, but is not limited to, laptop computers, keys to any doors at NEOMED, identification cards, parking permits, library books and materials not already returned. NEOMED agrees to allow Weisblat to retrieve her personal belongings from the Rootstown office location.
 16. Weisblat agrees that the terms and conditions of this Agreement are confidential and that she shall not disclose to any other persons except to her counsel or her immediate family or financial advisor, the terms of this Agreement unless required by applicable law. The Parties agree to refer to matters addressed in this Agreement on a positive note, utilizing a consistent message suggesting that "the University is taking a different strategic direction but wants to support Dr. Weisblat in this very important work as she directs the next phase of Education for Service."
 17. This Agreement shall be binding upon both Parties' heirs, administrators, representatives, executors, successors, and assigns, and shall inure to the benefit of Parties and each of them, and to their heirs, administrators, representatives, executors, successors and assigns.
 18. This Agreement is made and entered into in the State of Ohio, and shall in all respects be interpreted, enforced, and governed under the laws of Ohio.
 19. Both Parties agree that scanned or faxed copies of signatures are sufficient to contractually bind the signing Party to the Agreement. This Agreement may be executed in counterparts, each of which shall be original, but all of which, when taken together, shall constitute are and the same Agreement.

20. Should any provision of this Agreement be declared or be determined by any court to be illegal or invalid, the validity of the remaining parts, terms, or provisions shall not be affected thereby and said illegal or invalid part, term or provision shall be deemed not to be a part of this Agreement.
21. This Agreement sets forth the entire understanding and agreement between the Parties hereto and fully supersedes any and all prior or contemporaneous agreements or understandings between the Parties pertaining to the subject matter hereof. This Agreement cannot be amended, modified, or supplemented in any respect except by a subsequent and written agreement entered into and signed by both Parties.
22. The Parties agree to negotiate in good faith to resolve any dispute between them regarding this Agreement. Good faith negotiations for the purposes of this Agreement require that both Parties clearly identify her/its position on any dispute in writing and provide the other Party with all underlying documentation which she/it claims support her/its position in a timely manner. A Party will respond within ten (10) business days to any dispute claim made to her/it by the opposing Party. The Parties are encouraged to, but not required to, engage in mediation through a mutually acceptable third-party if their direct negotiations do not result in resolution within 10 business days thereafter.

WEISBLAT REPRESENTS THAT SHE HAS CAREFULLY READ THIS AGREEMENT AND HAS HAD A FULL OPPORTUNITY TO HAVE THIS AGREEMENT REVIEWED BY LEGAL COUNSEL SELECTED BY WEISBLAT. WEISBLAT FURTHER REPRESENTS THAT SHE UNDERSTANDS THE CONTENT AND CONSEQUENCES OF SIGNING THIS AGREEMENT AND THAT SHE EXECUTES IT AS HER OWN FREE ACT AND DEED INTENDING TO BE LEGALLY BOUND BY IT. WEISBLAT ALSO REPRESENTS THAT SHE UNDERSTANDS THAT SHE IS WAIVING, AMONG OTHER THINGS, ANY RIGHTS OR CLAIMS ARISING UNDER FEDERAL OR STATE LAW INCLUDING CLAIMS PURSUANT TO TITLE VII OF THE CIVIL RIGHTS ACT AND THE AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT IN WHICH SHE HAS CERTAIN SPECIFIC RIGHTS.

(remainder of this page is left intentionally blank)


IN WITNESS WHEREOF, the Parties hereto have caused this Agreement to be duly executed as of this ____ day of _____, 2018.

Gina Weisblat, Ph.D.

STATE OF OHIO)
COUNTY OF _____) SS:

Sworn to before me in the aforementioned county and subscribed in my presence this _____ day of _____, 2018.

Notary Public


Elisabeth H. Young, M.D.
Dean, College of Medicine


STATE OF OHIO)
COUNTY OF PORTAGE) SS:

Sworn to before me in the aforementioned county and subscribed in my presence this 7th day of March, 2018.

Shelley A Bojo

Notary Public, State of Ohio
My Commission Expires: 1/29/2022

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, the Parties hereto have caused this Agreement to be duly executed as of this ____ day of March 7, 2018.


Gina Weisblat, Ph.D.

STATE OF OHIO)
COUNTY OF CUYAHOGA) SS:

Sworn to before me in the aforementioned county and subscribed in my presence this 7th day of MARCH, 2018.

Flouren M. Goldkrantz
Notary Public

FLORENCE M. GOLDKRANTZ
Notary Public, State of Ohio, Cuy. Cty.
My commission expires July 1, 2019

Elisabeth H. Young, M.D.
Dean, College of Medicine

STATE OF OHIO)
COUNTY OF PORTAGE) SS:

Sworn to before me in the aforementioned county and subscribed in my presence this _____ day of _____, 2018.

Notary Public

Exhibit A
(to be provided on NEOMED letterhead)

Dear X,

I am pleased to provide this recommendation for Gina Weisblat, Ph.D., Assistant Professor, Family and Community Medicine and Director, Education for Service. During her six years at the Northeast Ohio Medical University (NEOMED), Dr. Weisblat has passionately advocated for and created transformational and innovative pipeline programs for students interested in healthcare vocations. She is recognized as a national expert in under-resourced pipeline program development and diverse student engagement for kindergarten through twelfth grade students and undergraduate students interested in pursuing healthcare fields. Her strong commitment to the pursuit of NEOMED's mission to graduate exemplary healthcare providers oriented to community care practice, has resulted in expansion of inter-professional and community programs across northeast Ohio with broadening of the reach of programming into underserved communities. Her success in the attainment of grants to support her work is clearly prolific, having obtained funding from local, state, and federal sources.

Dr. Weisblat has received multiple grants related to STEM+M, community development, and community public health. Her portfolio includes a recently completed 3-year state community health worker (CHW) MEDTAPP grant that focused on building a CHW curriculum, an interdisciplinary practice model, and a foundational platform for the integration of CHWs in Ohio. A large AmeriCorps grant provides 40 members to assist economically disadvantaged middle school through college students with academic and career support through the utilization of a service-learning model i.e. Health Professions Affinity Communities (HPAC), while concurrently training AmeriCorps members as CHWs to address STEM+M education, public health and social health disparities, and advancement of underrepresented and underprivileged populations. Nationally, she is engaged in a multiyear HRSA funded Health Careers Opportunity Program (HCOP) grant exploring health disparities from the lens of the community and a NIH (NIMH) Urban Serving Universities award. Additionally, she has procured funding to build urban programs to support baccalaureate level pathways to terminal healthcare degrees.

Dr. Weisblat excels as a passionate and highly motivated individual committed to her work. These qualities will provide a strong platform for her to further build upon her impressive reputation in the area of community engagement.

Sincerely,

Elisabeth H. Young, M.D.
Vice President for Health Affairs
Dean, College of Medicine
Professor of Internal Medicine
Northeast Ohio Medical University

STATE OF OHIO

SS: AFFIDAVIT

COUNTY OF Portage

MARIA R. SCHIMER, the General Counsel at Northeast Ohio Medical University (NEOMED), first being duly sworn and under oath, does declare that the following is true and accurate to the best of my knowledge:

1. Gina Weisblat, Ph.D., was a faculty member at NEOMED from September 2012 until June 30, 2018, during which time she worked on the Ameri Corp Program.
2. Dr. Weisblat and NEOMED entered into a Separation and Mutual Release Agreement on March 7, 2018.
3. In accordance with the NEOMED Intellectual Property Policy, Dr. Weisblat was granted the rights under the Separation and Release Agreement to use the intellectual property that she produced under the Ameri Corp Program while an employee of NEOMED.
4. In accordance with the NEOMED Intellectual Property Policy, NEOMED does not assert any copyright ownership for Dr. Weisblat's work on the Ameri Corp Program during her employment at NEOMED, including the year 2013.

FURTHER AFFIANT SAYETH NAUGHT.




**MARIA R. SCHIMER
GENERAL COUNSEL
NEOMED**

SWORN TO BEFORE ME and subscribed in my presence on this 8th day of July, 2024.



Attorney Amy Porey-Ligan
Resident Summit County
Notary Public, State of Ohio
My Commission Has No Expiration Date
Sec 147.03 RC



Notary Public